You're My Pet
10
Yayoi Ogawa

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CONTENTS

RULE 53:
MUTUAL THERAPY — 6

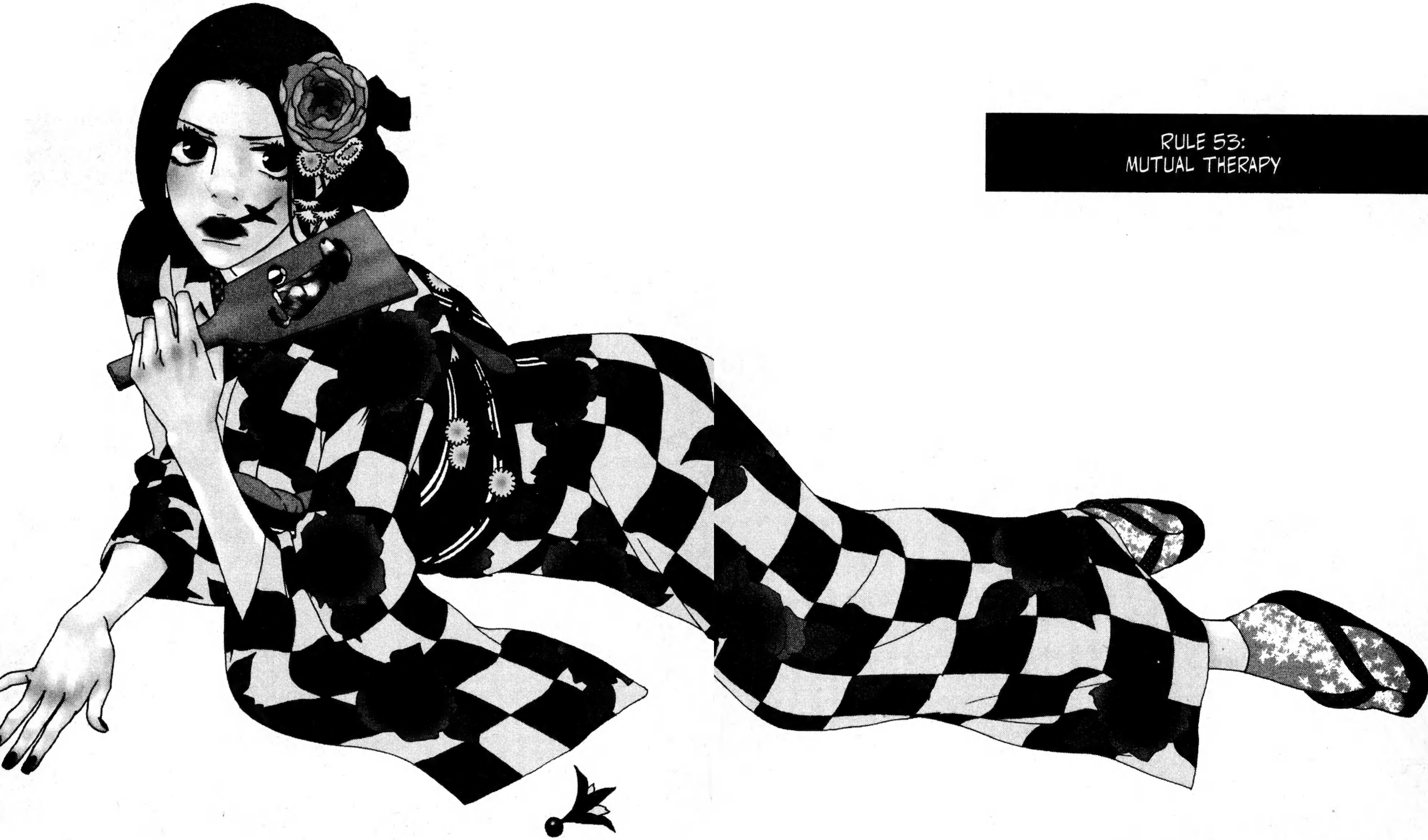
RULE 54:
ICE QUEEN — 39

RULE 55:
WOMAN OF THE CANCER SIGN — 67

RULE 56:
KOTOBUKI-TAISHA — 97

RULE 57:
SOME KIND OF EN — 126

RULE 58:
PRIORITIES — 159



RULE 53:
MUTUAL THERAPY

MOMO
AND ME

YOU SPELLED IT WRONG.
I'LL TEACH YOU A SONG.
IT'S "PLEASE DON'T LET GO OF L-A-E-T-I-T-I-A."
HE PROBABLY DOESN'T UNDERSTAND FRENCH ANYWAY.
LAETITIA'S JUST CURI-OUS, THAT'S ALL.
HE'S LIKE A MONKEY, ISN'T HE? HE'S SO SHORT.
SHH!
WHAT'S THE MATTER? YOU LOOK LIKE YOU CAN'T BREATHE.
DO YOU FEEL SICK?
WHISPER
...YOU SUCK.

DON'T LET THEM GET TO YOU.
ASIDE FROM THAT, ARE YOU FEELING BETTER?
HE'S GOING TO BE IN THE SCHOOL RECITAL...
...EVEN THOUGH HE'S JUST SOME EXCHANGE STUDENT!
HOW'S HE GOING TO DANCE WITH THOSE STUBBY LEGS?
LAETITIA...
LAETITIA!!

...WHAT?
WHO'S LAETITIA?!
WAKE UP!
ぱぁん
EEK! HOW CAN YOU DO THAT TO A SICK GUY?!
LET GO! I'M GOING TO FINISH THIS!
ARE YOU OKAY?
WE CALLED AN AMBULANCE!
AMBULANCE?
NO, I'M FINE!
LET'S MEET IT AT THE DELIVERY ENTRANCE. CAN YOU WALK BY YOURSELF?
NO, UMM...

HEY!
HEY! THERE'S A PORN STAR DOING A SWIMSUIT PHOTO SHOOT AND SHE HAS A MAJOR CAMEL TOE!
YOU CAN'T CALL YOURSELF A MAN IF YOU DON'T LOOK!
HE USED THE NINJA SKILL OF SUBSTITU-TION!
A GIGANTIC RUSSIAN NESTING DOLL!
TAKESHI!
PSST! OVER HERE!

TAK--
SHH.
I CAN'T BELIEVE IT! HOW COULD YOU DITCH ME LIKE THAT?
'CUZ I DON'T HAVE HEALTH INSURANCE OR MONEY.
AND EVEN IF I WENT TO THE HOSPITAL, THEY WOULDN'T FIND ANYTHING WRONG WITH ME.
COULD YOU GET ME THAT DRUG AGAIN FOR WHEN IT HAPPENS NEXT TIME?
TAKESHI...I...I'VE BEEN THINKING.
MAYBE YOU REALLY ARE SICK.

YOU'RE WRONG.
YOU CAN'T TELL ANYONE, OKAY?
HIS HANDS ...
...THEY'RE LIKE ICE!
LICK
MMM. STRAW-BERRY LIP GLOSS.
SEE YA!

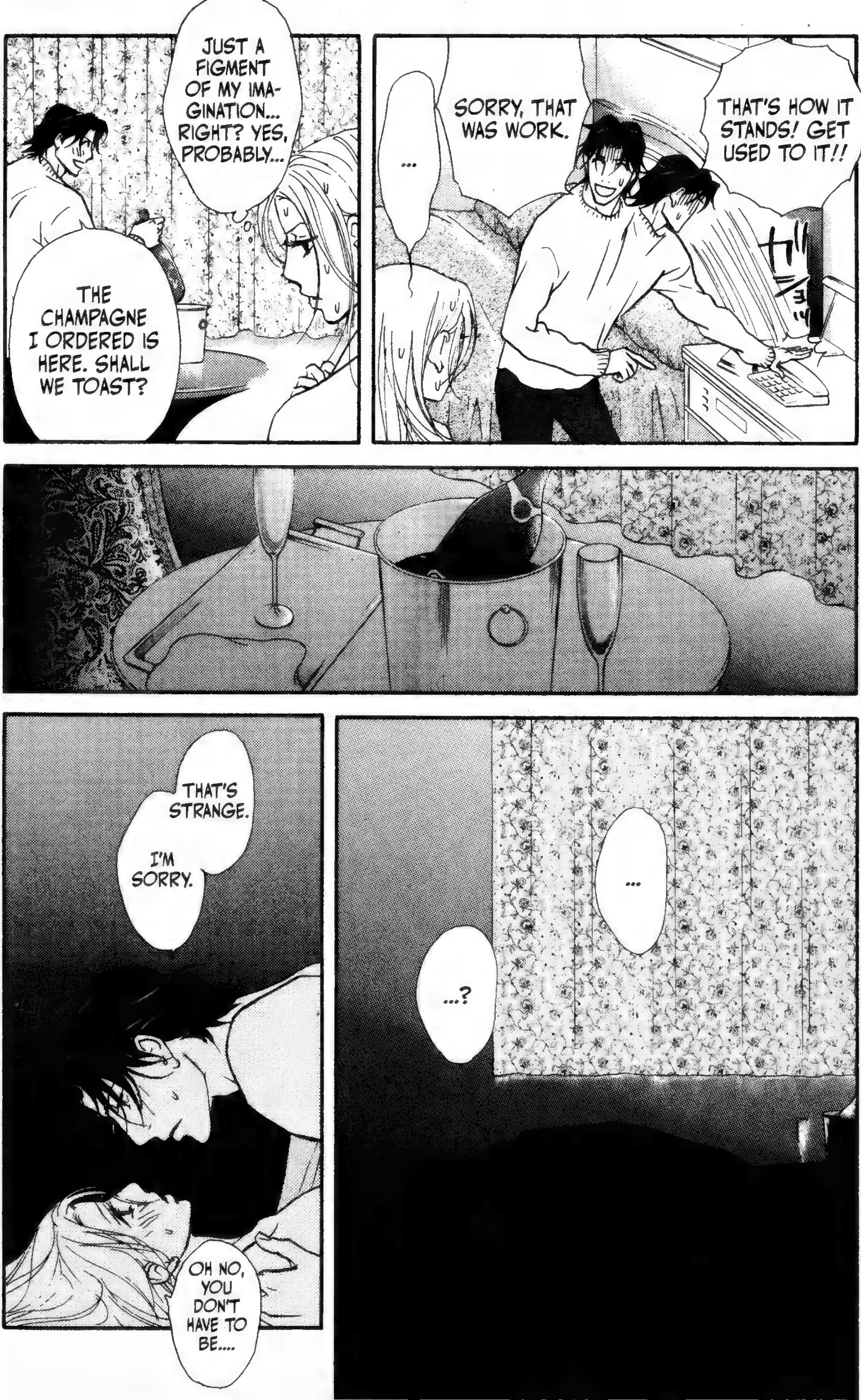
WHAT DID IWAYA-SAN JUST SAY?
IN A TINY, LITTLE SQUEAKY VOICE?
ISLE...
...MERRY EWE?
OF COURSE THAT'S NOT IT. I NEED TO CALM DOWN.
IF I'M NOT SURE, I CAN ASK.
IWAYA-SA--
ARE YOU OKAY?!
YES, I'M FINE. I'M SORRY.
I WAS NERVOUS. I GOT DIZZY...

DID YOU JUST... CONSENT?
I MEAN... TO THE MARRIAGE?
UH.
YES.
IS IT OKAY? I MEAN... ABOUT WORK AND THINGS?
PLING
UH, WELL, BECAUSE OF WORK, WE CAN'T RIGHT AWAY...
YES, OF COURSE, THAT'S RIGHT.
UH, ANYWAY, SHALL WE GO SOME PLACE FOR SOME TEA OR SOMETHING?
BECAUSE I'M DIZZY...!
WHAT? BUT IT'S SO LATE.
I'LL MISS MY FLIGHT IF--

NO, I'LL CHANGE MY FLIGHT TO THE FIRST ONE TOMORROW MORNING.
I DON'T WANT TO LEAVE YOU ON AN IMPORTANT DAY LIKE THIS!
THAT'S RIGHT, THE RING! IT'S THE PERFECT TIME, SO WHY DON'T WE GO LOOK? WHERE SHOULD WE GO? GINZA?
DO YOU THINK SHOPS WILL BE OPEN? CAN WE GET A BUS FROM HERE?
SENPAI, SHOULDN'T YOU CHANGE YOUR FLIGHT FIRST?
OH! THAT'S RIGHT!
HE'S EXCITED.
I'M GLAD...

...BUT AM I REALLY?
I HAVE TO CALL MOMO NOW.
DOESN'T LOOK LIKE I'M GOING HOME TO-NIGHT.
RING
RING
...
HE'S NOT ANSWER-ING.
NOT AN-SWERING HIS CELL, EITHER.
I WONDER WHERE HE WENT.

...LIKE I SAID, IT'S REALLY WORK.
WHY DON'T YOU GIVE UP? I'M HANGING UP NOW.
...DON'T BURN IT.
"BURN WHAT?" DONT GIVE ME THAT--!
CREAK
YOU DO THAT AND SERIOUSLY I'LL KILL YOU!!
UH.


THAT'S HOW IT STANDS! GET USED TO IT!!
SORRY, THAT WAS WORK.
...
JUST A FIGMENT OF MY IMAGINATION... RIGHT? YES, PROBABLY...
THE CHAMPAGNE I ORDERED IS HERE. SHALL WE TOAST?
...
...?
THAT'S STRANGE.
I'M SORRY.
OH NO, YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE....

DID I DRINK TOO MUCH?
I WAS SO HAPPY...
...
SO, IN THE END, HE COULDN'T GET IT UP, EH?
DON'T BE SO BLUNT ABOUT IT!
HEY, IT'S NOT LIKE I SAID HE COULDN'T GET ERECT OR THAT HE WAS IMPOTENT OR SOMETHING, RIGHT?
YURI-CHAN...
THAT'S NOT THE ONLY THING. I SENSED OTHER THINGS, TOO, YOU KNOW...ASPECTS OF HASUMI-SENPAI THAT I'D NEVER SEEN BEFORE.
GRAND-MA?
NO, NOT GRAND-MA.
MAYBE YOU SHOULD TRY A SEE-THROUGH BIKINI.
OH, STOP IT.

YOU'RE GETTING MARRIED, RIGHT? I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT IT'LL HAPPEN A LOT FROM NOW ON.
IT'S BECAUSE PEOPLE HAVE A LOT GOING ON IN THEIR HEADS, YOU KNOW?
MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT, BUT...
NOW THAT YOU MENTION THINGS YOU'VE NEVER SEE BEFORE...ABOUT THAT PET OF YOURS.
HE WAS ACTING KIND OF WEIRD.
HE HAD THIS AURA OF WEAKNESS, YOU KNOW? YOU COULD SEE IT JUST BY LOOKING AT HIM.
HE SAID YOU DIDN'T NEED HIM ANYMORE AND THINGS LIKE THAT, SUMIRE.
SO HE WAS...
...LISTENING?
HELLO? HEY!
GRAND-MA??!
I SAID IT'S NOT GRAND-MA!

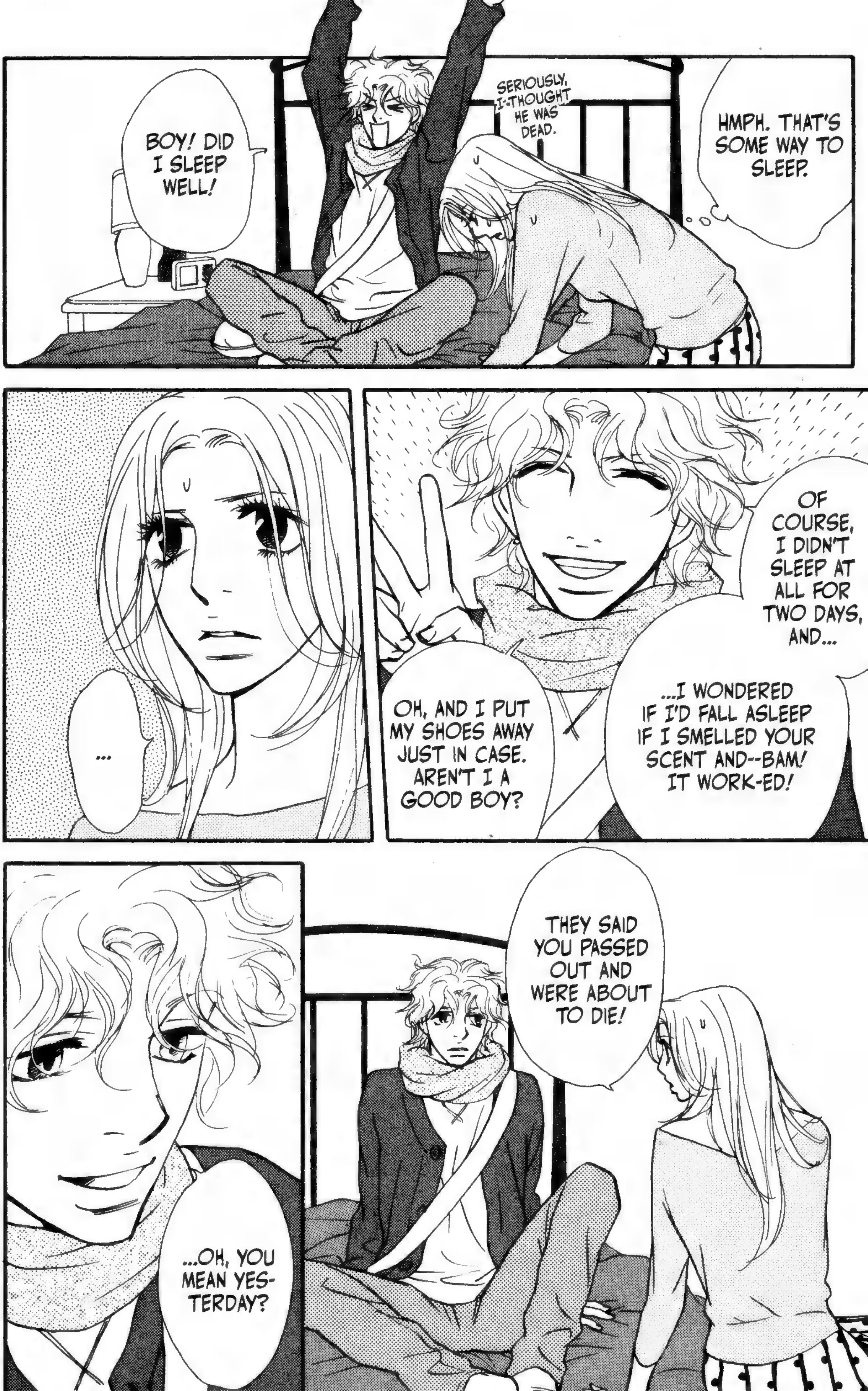
HE'S NOT HERE...
HASN'T HE COME HOME SINCE YESTERDAY?
LOOKS LIKE HE'S HIDING SOMETHING UNDER THE BLANKET.
IT'S PRETTY LATE.
I HAVE TO CHANGE AND GO TO WORK...
RINNNG
THAT'S MOMO'S PRIVATE LINE...
EVEN THOUGH HE'S MY PET, I JUST CAN'T GO AND ANSWER SOMEONE ELSE'S PHONE.
...
HELLO, TAKESHI?!
WHOA, WHOA!!
BUT SHE ANSWERED IT ANYWAY.

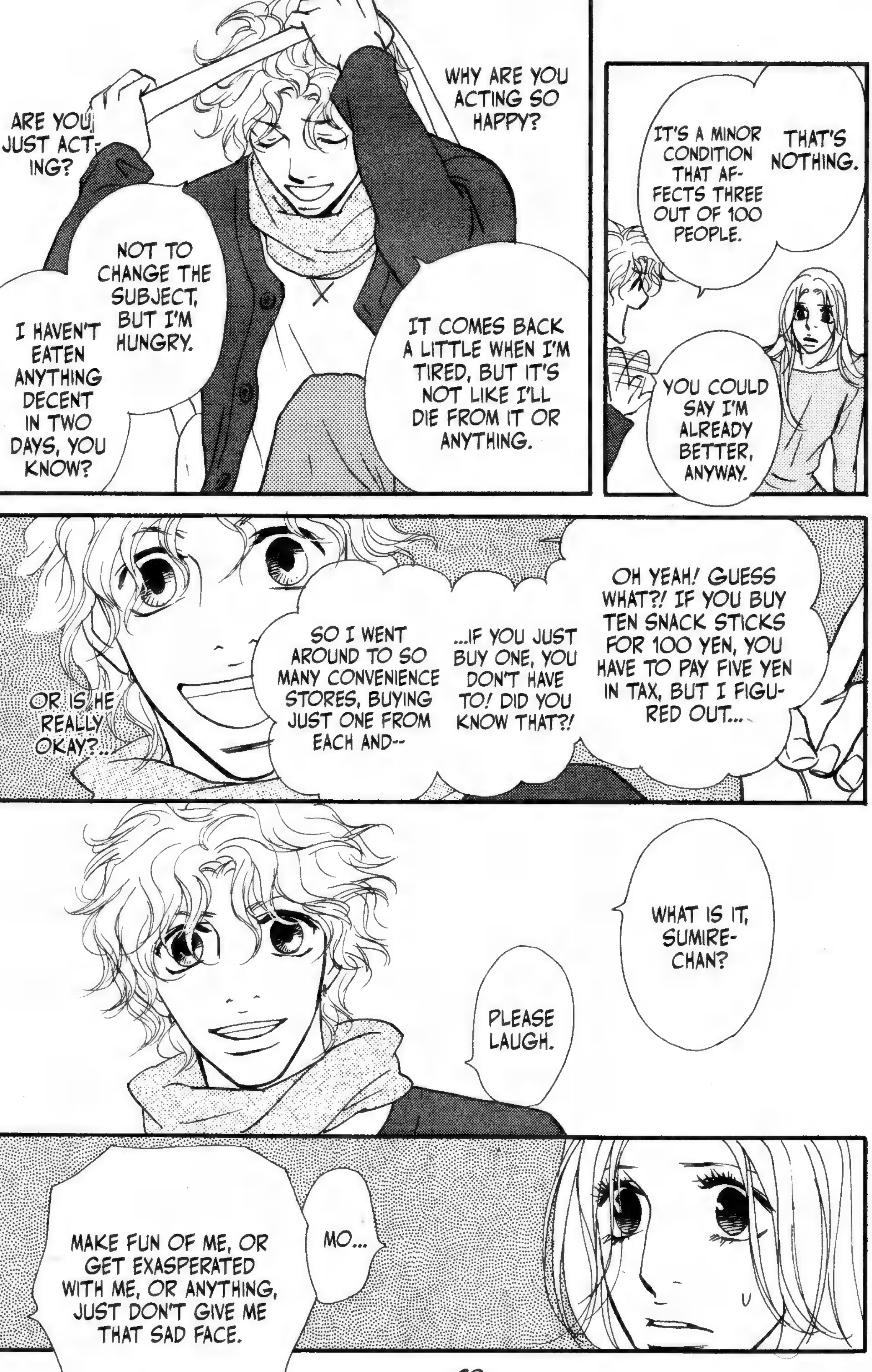
HMPH. IT'S THAT WOMAN.
"HMPH"?
I'M SORRY I'M "THAT WOMAN."
TAKESHI ISN'T THERE? I KEEP CAL-LING, BUT THERE'S NO ANSWER.
SAME HERE. I JUST GOT HOME AND--
I'LL TRY LOOKING EVERY-WHERE I CAN THINK OF, SO YOU STAY HOME, LADY.
WHAT? I HAVE TO GO TO WORK.
WORK?! DON'T YOU CARE WHAT HAPPENS TO TAKESHI?!
HE ONLY PASSED OUT YESTER-DAY, YOU KNOW!
P-PASSED OUT?
IN THE MIDDLE OF A COMPETITION! HE WAS DYING, YOU KNOW!
REALLY! I'M NOT ASKING YOU FOR MUCH!
PASSED OUT...

TELL ME ABOUT TAKESHI'S BODY!
EMINO MODERN STUDIO
YOU KNOW EVERY NOOK AND CRANNY OF IT, DON'T YOU, RUMI?
NOT AGAIN.
YOU CAN'T SCARE ME OFF WITH SEXUAL HARASSMENT!
IF YOU DON'T TELL ME, I'LL MAKE YOUR LIFE A LIVING HELL!
TOMONARI, DO SOMETHING ABOUT THIS MONKEY ON MY BACK.
NO WAY. I'M NOT TOUCHING THIS ONE.
I DON'T KNOW ALL THE DETAILS EITHER.
I KNOW HE HAD THIS TYPE OF SEIZURE WHEN HE WAS AN EXCHANGE STUDENT IN FRANCE.
HE SAID HE'S TOTALLY OVER IT NOW.
BUT HE PASSED OUT! SO THAT MEANS HE'S NOT OVER IT, RIGHT?!
YEAH...
EVEN IF THAT'S TRUE, IT'S NOT LIKE THERE'S ANYTHING I CAN DO.
UMINO-SAN, YOU ARE SO COLD.
WELL, YEAH.
THAT'S HOW GROWN-UPS ARE.

THEN ONE MORE THING.
WHO'S LAETITIA?
BIP
BEEP
BEEP
OKAY, NOW I CAN SEARCH THE NEIGHBORHOOD FOR ANOTHER TWO HOURS...
...BUT BE-FORE THAT I'LL CHANGE, AND...
EMMA? IT'S IWAYA.
THE TYPESETTING FOR THE SUPPLEMENT IS COMING ALONG OKAY, RIGHT? UH HUH.
YEAH, I'LL LEAVE THAT UP TO YOU, TOO. I'LL BE THERE FOR THE THREE O'CLOCK MEETING.
?!

MO...
MOMO?
HE WAS ACTING KIND OF WEIRD.
HE WAS DYING, YOU KNOW!
NO!
MO--
ZZZZ...
KRCHHH...


HMPH. THAT'S SOME WAY TO SLEEP.
SERIOUSLY, I THOUGHT HE WAS DEAD.
BOY! DID I SLEEP WELL!
OF COURSE, I DIDN'T SLEEP AT ALL FOR TWO DAYS, AND...
...I WONDERED IF I'D FALL ASLEEP IF I SMELLED YOUR SCENT AND--BAM! IT WORK-ED!
OH, AND I PUT MY SHOES AWAY JUST IN CASE. AREN'T I A GOOD BOY?
...
THEY SAID YOU PASSED OUT AND WERE ABOUT TO DIE!
...OH, YOU MEAN YES-TERDAY?



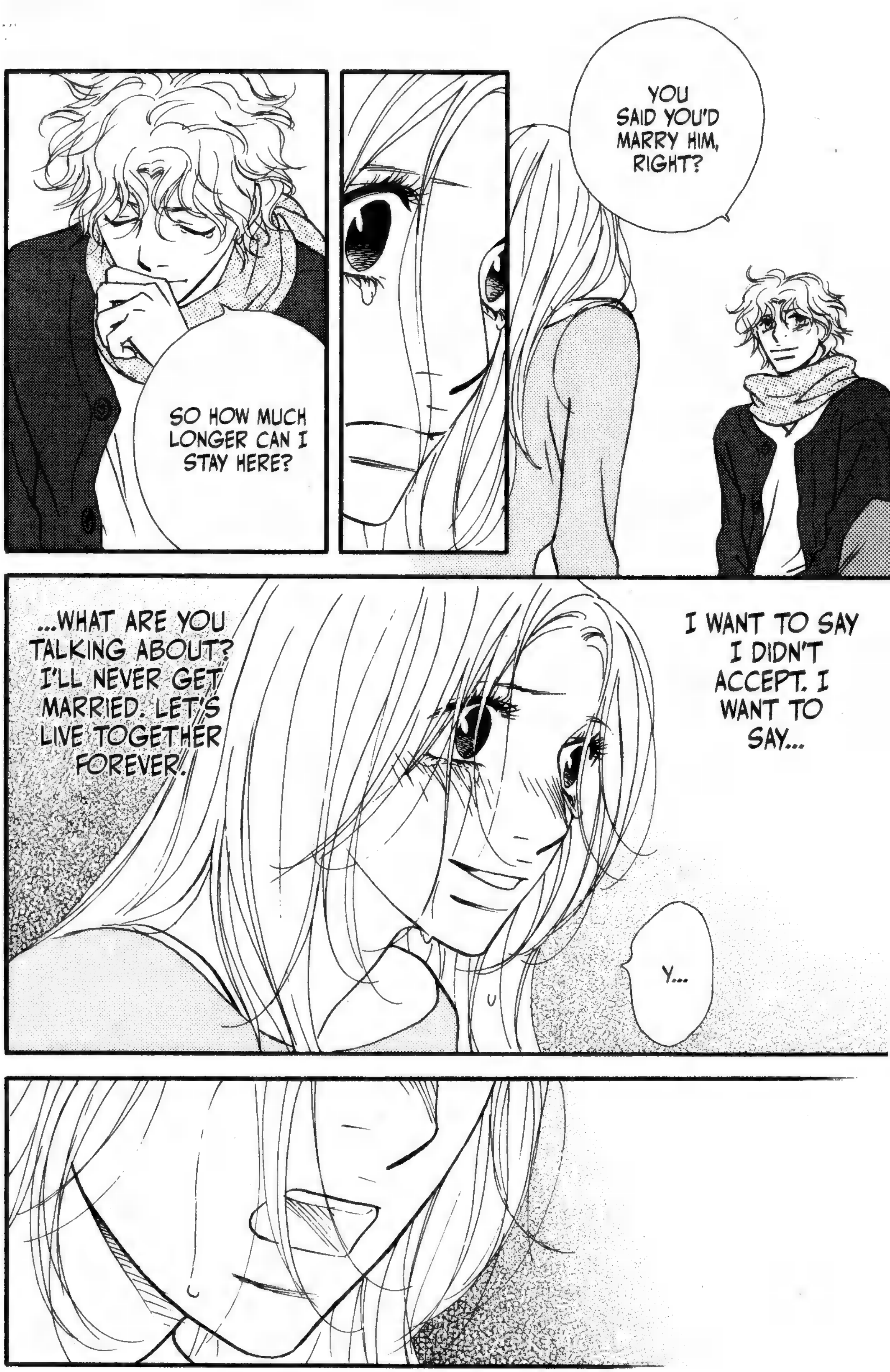
THAT'S NOTHING.
IT'S A MINOR CONDITION THAT AFFECTS THREE OUT OF 100 PEOPLE.
YOU COULD SAY I'M ALREADY BETTER, ANYWAY.
WHY ARE YOU ACTING SO HAPPY?
ARE YOU JUST ACTING?
IT COMES BACK A LITTLE WHEN I'M TIRED, BUT IT'S NOT LIKE I'LL DIE FROM IT OR ANYTHING.
NOT TO CHANGE THE SUBJECT, BUT I'M HUNGRY.
I HAVEN'T EATEN ANYTHING DECENT IN TWO DAYS, YOU KNOW?
OH YEAH! GUESS WHAT?! IF YOU BUY TEN SNACK STICKS FOR 100 YEN, YOU HAVE TO PAY FIVE YEN IN TAX, BUT I FIGURED OUT...
...IF YOU JUST BUY ONE, YOU DON'T HAVE TO! DID YOU KNOW THAT?!
SO I WENT AROUND TO SO MANY CONVENIENCE STORES, BUYING JUST ONE FROM EACH AND--
OR IS HE REALLY OKAY?...
WHAT IS IT, SUMIRE-CHAN?
PLEASE LAUGH.
MO...
MAKE FUN OF ME, OR GET EXASPERATED WITH ME, OR ANYTHING, JUST DON'T GIVE ME THAT SAD FACE.

PLEASE...
...DON'T TELL ME TO GET OUT YET.
...IT SOUNDS LIKE THEY DON'T USU-ALLY LET EXCHANGE STUDENTS PER-FORM AT THEIR SCHOOL RECITALS THERE, BUT...
...TAKESHI GOT TO DO A GALA PER-FORMANCE WITH THE GIRL HE WAS GOING OUT WITH AT THE TIME.
THAT'S LAETITIA?
PROBABLY. I NEVER HEARD HER NAME, THOUGH.
ANYWAY, THAT WAS WHEN HE WAS HAVING THOSE SEIZURES, AND...
... ONE DAY WHILE PRACTI-CING...

...!
HIS SUPPORTING HAND WAS LATE AND SHE HIT HER HEAD.
LUCKILY, IT WAS JUST A LIGHT CONCUSSION AND THERE WAS NOTHING WRONG WITH HER, BUT...
SHE COULDN'T DO THE PAS DE TROIS* ANYMORE.
SO SHE DIDN'T TAKE THE EN-TRANCE EXAMS FOR THE OPERA, AND SAID SHE WAS GOING TO GO HOME TO BECOME A BAL-LET TEACHER.
IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT.
I WASN'T MADE FOR IT IN THE FIRST PLACE. THE COMPETITION'S TOO CRUEL...
NOTE: "DANCE FOR THREE."

MY...ILLNESS ITSELF IS LIGHT AND GETS BETTER WITH MEDICINE RIGHT AWAY, BUT...
...FIGHTING WITH THE FEAR THAT I MIGHT HURT SOMEONE I CARED FOR WAS HELL.
I LEFT HOME AS SOON AS I GOT BACK TO JAPAN. WHILE I WAS DRIFTING AIMLESSLY, I REALIZED...
...THAT THERE ARE A LOT OF PEOPLE WHO'RE WEAKENED BECAUSE OF WORRIES OR STRESS OR JUST BECAUSE LIFE DEALT THEM A BAD HAND.
WHEN I COULD HELP SOMEONE LIKE THAT, THE FEAR WENT AWAY.
THE MORE SOMEONE NEEDED ME, THE STRONGER I GOT...
THOSE KINDS OF RELATIONSHIPS WERE LIKE MEDICINE TO ME.
THAT'S WHY...
...I PLANNED ON LEAVING HERE AS SOON AS YOU DIDN'T NEED ME ANYMORE.
BUT THE TRUTH IS...

THE TRUTH IS...
...I NEED YOU, SUMIRE.
I NEED YOU FOR THINGS LIKE MAK-ING ME DINNER AND PATTING MY HEAD AND YELLING AT ME...
...AND PRAIS-ING ME AND THROWING ME AROUND...
...AND DRYING YOUR TEARS.
ALL THOSE THINGS.
MOMO...

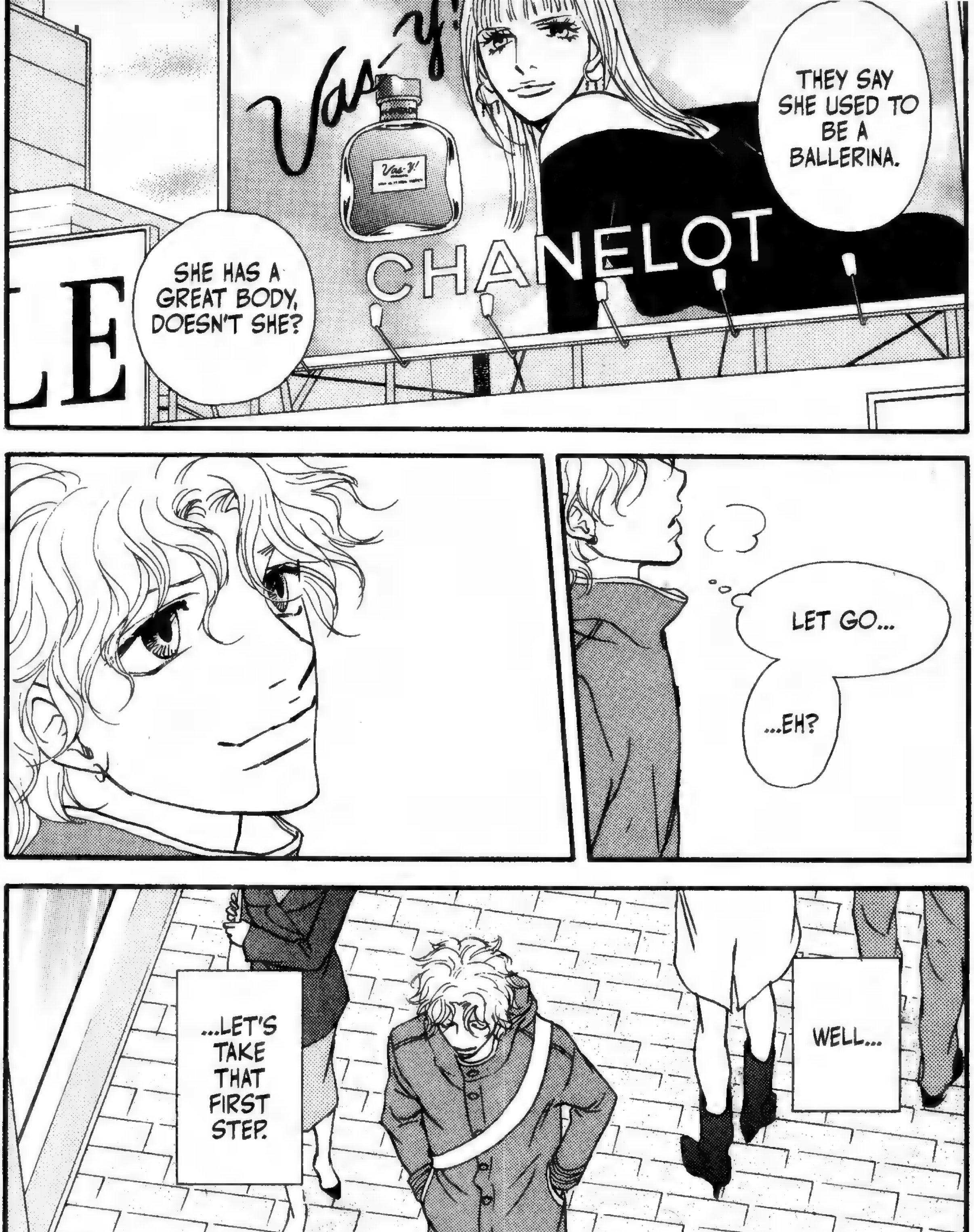


YOU SAID YOU'D MARRY HIM, RIGHT?
SO HOW MUCH LONGER CAN I STAY HERE?
I WANT TO SAY I DIDN'T ACCEPT. I WANT TO SAY...
...WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? I'LL NEVER GET MARRIED. LET'S LIVE TOGETHER FOREVER.
Y...

BUT IF I SAY THAT...
...WE'LL NEVER END THIS STALE-MATE.
YEAH...
ABOUT...SIX MONTHS.
SO I HAVE SIX MONTHS TO REHABILI-TATE, EH?
SNIFF
LET'S GIVE IT OUR BEST SHOT, EH, MASTER?

WHAT AM I ABOUT TO LOSE?
I KNOW I'VE BEEN CALLING HIM A PET UNTIL NOW...
BOSS! LOOK AT THIS!
A PIG?
I GOT A NEW PHONE WITH A CAMERA AND MADE THIS MY WALL-PAPER RIGHT AWAY.
CUTE, ISN'T IT?
IT IS CUTE, ISN'T IT... THE PIG IS.
"PINK AND ME"
ISN'T IT?
HOW ABOUT YOU, BOSS? DO YOU HAVE YOUR PET AS WALL-PAPER?

"MOMO AND ME"
2:21PM
IT JUST LOOKS LIKE SOME STUPID COUPLE.
WELL, THE MAGAZINES SAY CRADLE-ROBBING IS IN...
THEY SAY PETS RELIEVE YOUR EVERY-DAY STRESSES, DON'T THEY?
T-THAT'S RIGHT, THAT MIGHT BE NICE...
WE'RE LUCKY TO HAVE THEM.
THAT'S HER, RIGHT? CHANEL'S NEW MUSE?
I READ ABOUT HER. HER NAME IS LAETITIA POULAIN.


Vas-y!
CHANELOT
THEY SAY SHE USED TO BE A BALLERINA.
SHE HAS A GREAT BODY, DOESN'T SHE?
LE
LET GO...
...EH?
WELL...
...LET'S TAKE THAT FIRST STEP.

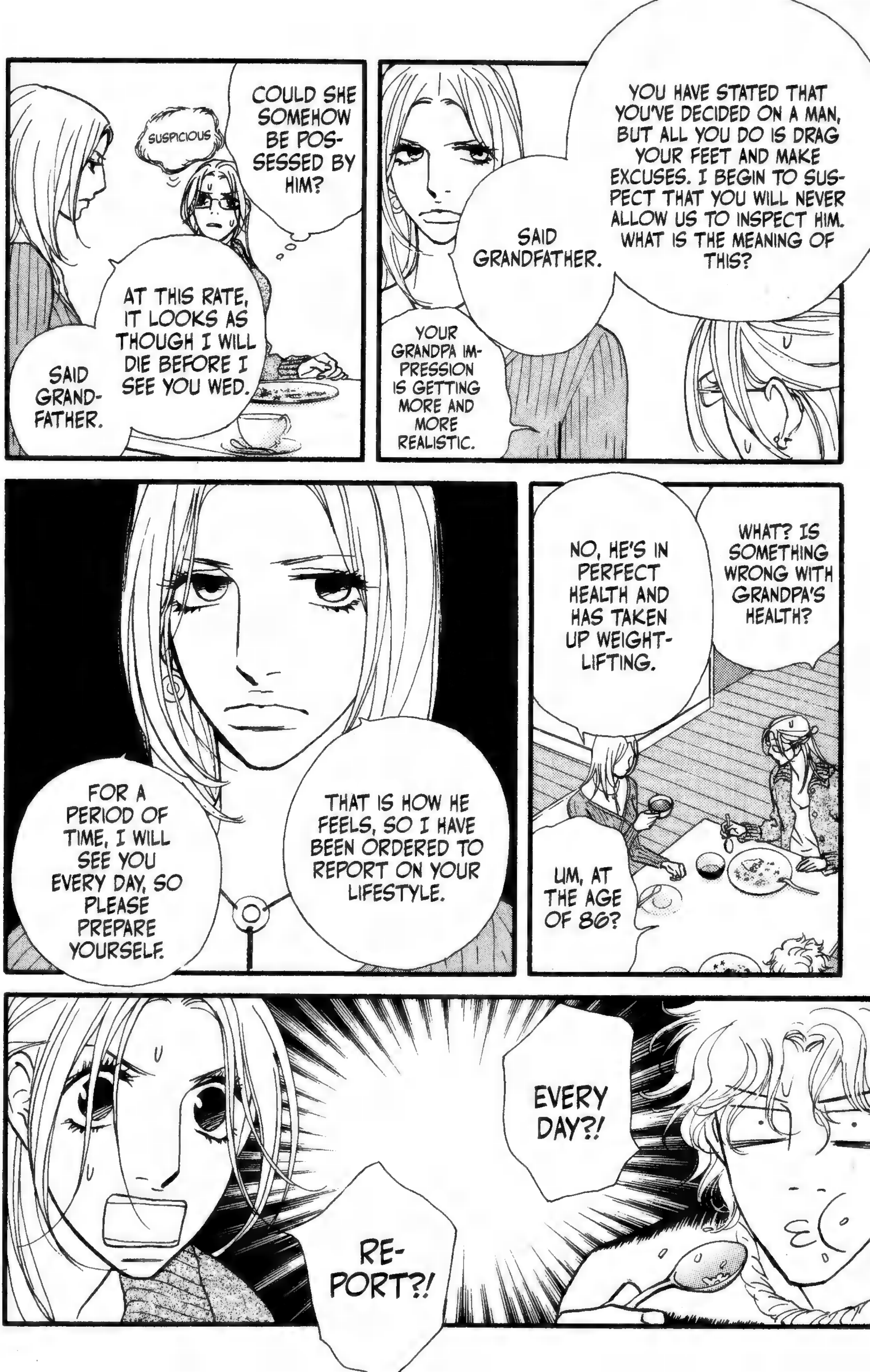
RULE 54:
ICE QUEEN

"A SUITE WITH A JACUZZI OVER-LOOKING THE CITY AT NIGHT FROM THE HEIGHT OF THE 48TH FLOOR!"
"CHAMPAGNE AND SEASONAL FRUIT AWAIT YOU IN THIS ROOM REPLETE WITH THE DELICATE SCENT OF CASABLANCA LILIES!"
"SUPER MILLENNIUM SHOOTING STAR PLAN!"
EEK! IT'S LIKE YOU'D HAVE TO GET MARRIED AFTER THIS!!
NO ONE SAID ANYTHING ABOUT GOING WITH YOU.
NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT, WHY DOES IT SAY "MILLENNIUM"?
JUST BECAUSE IT SOUNDS COOL?
Ocean Tower HOTEL
HOTEL CHAIN
I KNOW IT'S SHORT NOTICE BECAUSE IT'S THE DAY AFTER TO-MORROW.
BUT IT SEEMS LIKE A WASTE TO CANCEL IT AND SO I THOUGHT MAYBE YOU COULD USE IT, IF YOU WERE FREE.
BUT...YOU MADE THESE RESERVATIONS TO CELEBRATE YOUR WEDDING ANNIVERSARY WITH SHINICHI-SAN, RIGHT?
THANK YOU, YURI-CHAN!
NO, I MEANT WITH HASUMI-SAN.

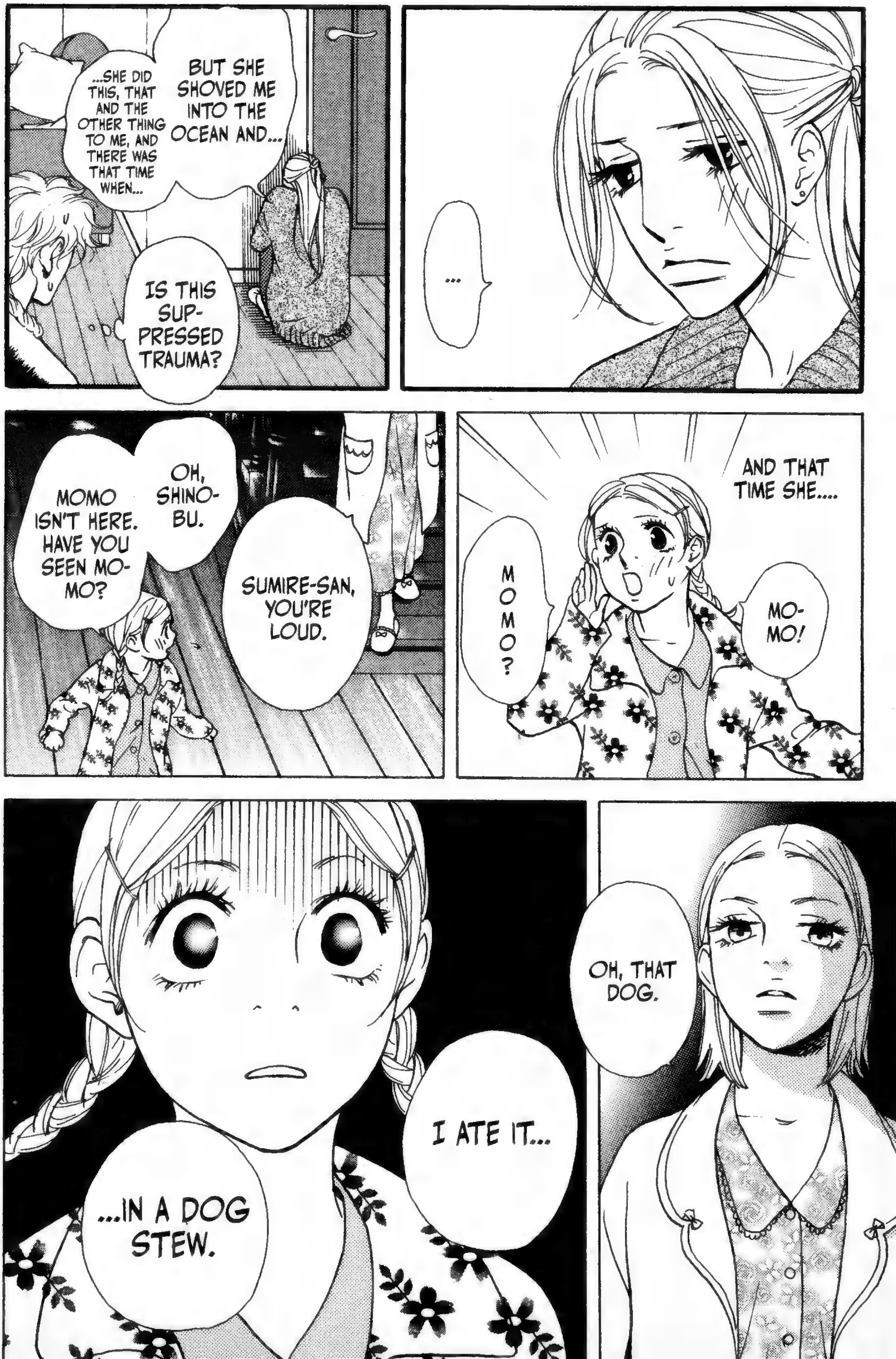
...CAN YOU BELIEVE IT? SHE GOT A SLIPPED DISK, WITH THAT FACE!
HER FACE HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH IT, YOU KNOW.
WE'RE TAKING TURNS TAKING CARE OF HER WITH MY SISTER-IN-LAW. SO THERE'S NO WAY SHE CAN WATCH RAN RIGHT NOW!
OH!
IS HE CHEATING ON YOU AG--
NO, NO!
WE WERE PLAN-NING TO LEAVE RAN WITH MY MOTHER-IN-LAW, BUT...
...
IT'S JUST THAT WE HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO TAKE A VACATION WITH JUST THE TWO OF US SINCE RAN WAS BORN.
AND THERE'S A WEDDING ANNI-VERSARY EVERY YEAR, SO, YOU KNOW. NO BIG DEAL.
W-WELL, THAT'S NICE OF YOU TO SAY, BUT...
BUT THE SHOOTING STAR--OOF!
IT'LL BE FINE! JUST LEAVE EVERY-THING TO ME!
DON'T SAY THAT. GO! I'LL TAKE CARE OF RAN-CHAN.
WHAT?

AFTER ALL, YOU'RE ALWAYS HELP-ING ME.
I SHOULD HELP YOU IN TIMES LIKE THESE.
RIGHT?!
うーん
OKAY...
I DON'T KNOW ABOUT THIS...
ARE YOU REALLY OKAY TAKING CARE OF RAN-CHAN ALL WEEK-END?
IT'LL BE FINE.
I CHANGED MY SISTER'S DIAPERS WHEN I WAS LITTLE.
YEAH, BUT HOW LONG AGO WAS THAT?
DIING

...
...
DO YOU ALWAYS HAVE DINNER AT SUCH AN HOUR?
I CANNOT THINK THAT IT IS A DESIRABLE HABIT.
U-UMM, YOU COULD SAY WE WERE JUST ABOUT TO FINISH EATING.
THEN PLEASE FINISH QUICKLY.
YES...
S-SHINOBU, IS IT OKAY FOR YOU TO BE ABOUT SO LATE AT NIGHT?
SUMIRE-SAN, HAVE YOU STILL NOT RID YOURSELF OF THAT STUTTER?
UH, YES, I MEAN, NO...WORKING ON IT...
I HAVE PUT THE CHILDREN TO BED AND I HAVE TAKAHITO-SAMA'S CONSENT, SO YOU NEEDN'T WORRY. BUT MY ERRAND IS OF MORE IMPORTANCE...
...THAN MY DOMESTIC ARRANGEMENTS, SUMIRE-SAN.

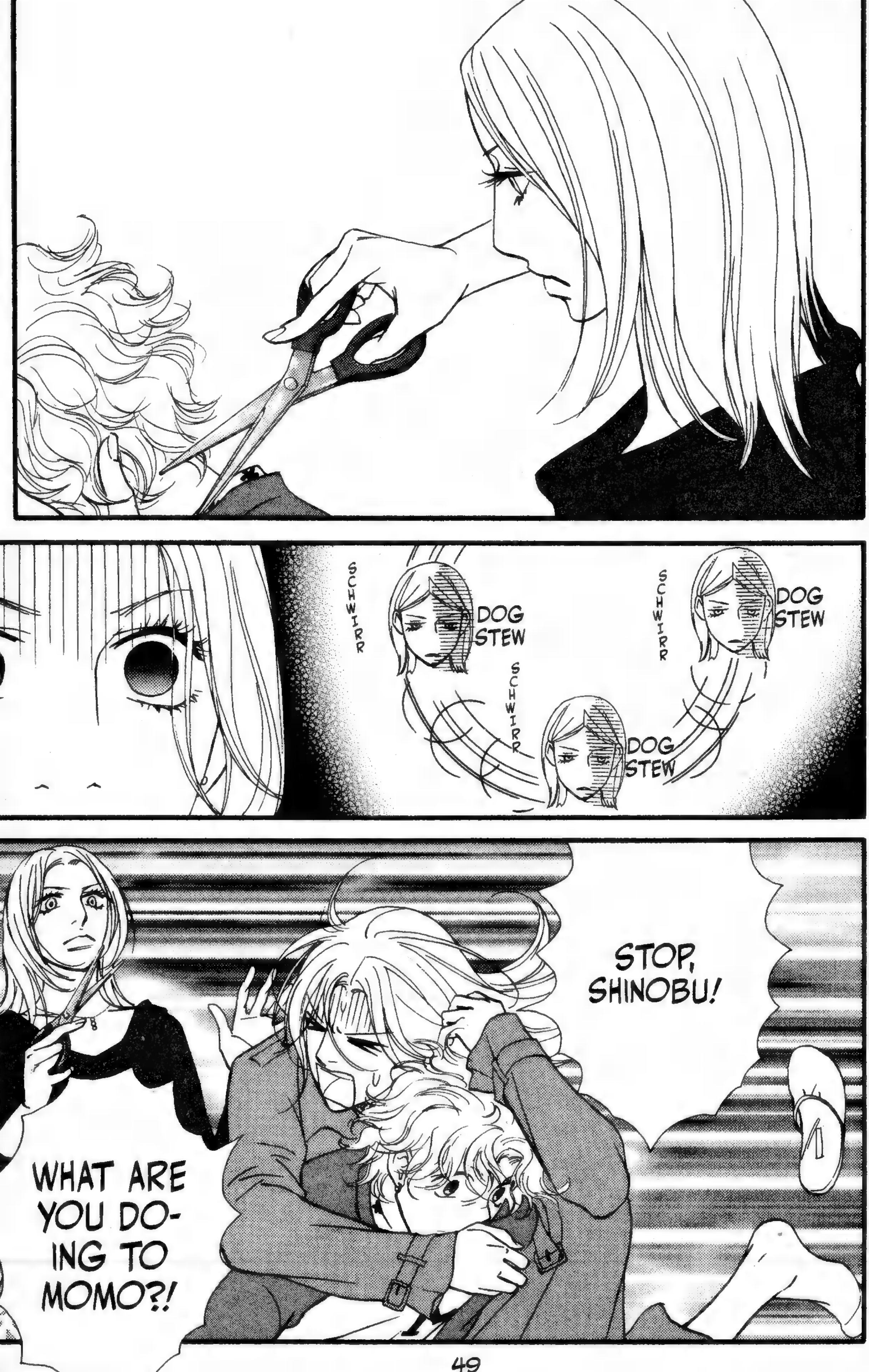

YOU HAVE STATED THAT YOU'VE DECIDED ON A MAN, BUT ALL YOU DO IS DRAG YOUR FEET AND MAKE EXCUSES. I BEGIN TO SUSPECT THAT YOU WILL NEVER ALLOW US TO INSPECT HIM. WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THIS?
SAID GRANDFATHER.
YOUR GRANDPA IMPRESSION IS GETTING MORE AND MORE REALISTIC.
AT THIS RATE, IT LOOKS AS THOUGH I WILL DIE BEFORE I SEE YOU WED.
SAID GRANDFATHER.
SUSPICIOUS
COULD SHE SOMEHOW BE POSSESSED BY HIM?
WHAT? IS SOMETHING WRONG WITH GRANDPA'S HEALTH?
NO, HE'S IN PERFECT HEALTH AND HAS TAKEN UP WEIGHT-LIFTING.
UM, AT THE AGE OF 86?
THAT IS HOW HE FEELS, SO I HAVE BEEN ORDERED TO REPORT ON YOUR LIFESTYLE.
FOR A PERIOD OF TIME, I WILL SEE YOU EVERY DAY, SO PLEASE PREPARE YOURSELF.
EVERY DAY?!
REPORT?!

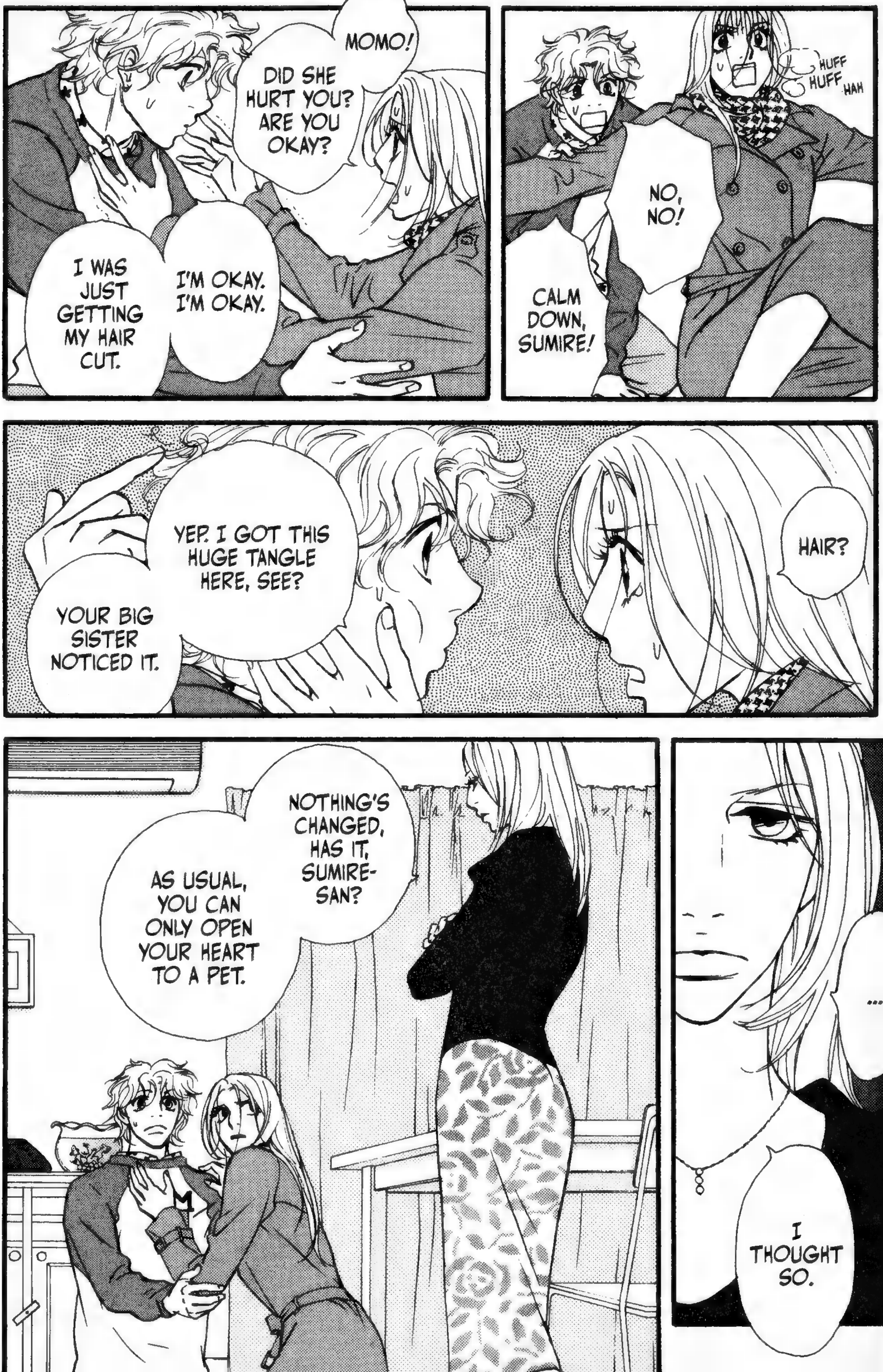
DO YOU OB- JECT?
NO, NO, THANK YOU FOR YOUR HARD WORK!
EXHAUSTED...
ARE YOU OKAY? SUMIRE- CHAN?
I'M NOT OKAY.
I THINK I'M GO- ING TO SNAP.
YOU DON'T THINK SHINO- BU WILL EXPOSE YOU, DO YOU?
PAT PAT
IF SHE WERE GOING TO TELL, SHE WOULD HAVE DONE IT A LONG TIME AGO, RIGHT?
SHE'S KEPT QUIET UNTIL NOW, SO I THINK IT'S ALL RIGHT.
SHE'S KIND OF (NO, VERY) SCARY, BUT SHE'S LIKE YOU.
A GOOD PERSON.


...
BUT SHE SHOVED ME INTO THE OCEAN AND...
...SHE DID THIS, THAT AND THE OTHER THING TO ME, AND THERE WAS THAT TIME WHEN...
IS THIS SUP-PRESSED TRAUMA?
AND THAT TIME SHE....
MO-MO!
MOMO?
OH, SHINO-BU.
MOMO ISN'T HERE. HAVE YOU SEEN MO-MO?
SUMIRE-SAN, YOU'RE LOUD.
OH, THAT DOG.
I ATE IT...
...IN A DOG STEW.

I FELT DEAD INSIDE UNTIL I FOUND MOMO LOCKED IN THE STOREHOUSE THE NEXT DAY.
EVEN NOW, JUST THINKING ABOUT IT MAKES MY HEART POUND.
HMM.
BUT MAYBE THAT'S...
...
...
EXTRA
MAGAZINE
WINTER
EXTRA CAR TUNE MAGAZINE. SHINOBU MAY BE OLD-FASHIONED AND FORMAL, BUT SHE'S NUTS ABOUT MUSCLE CARS.
MOMO-SAN.
WHAT?!
SHE MEANS ME?
OH.
YES?

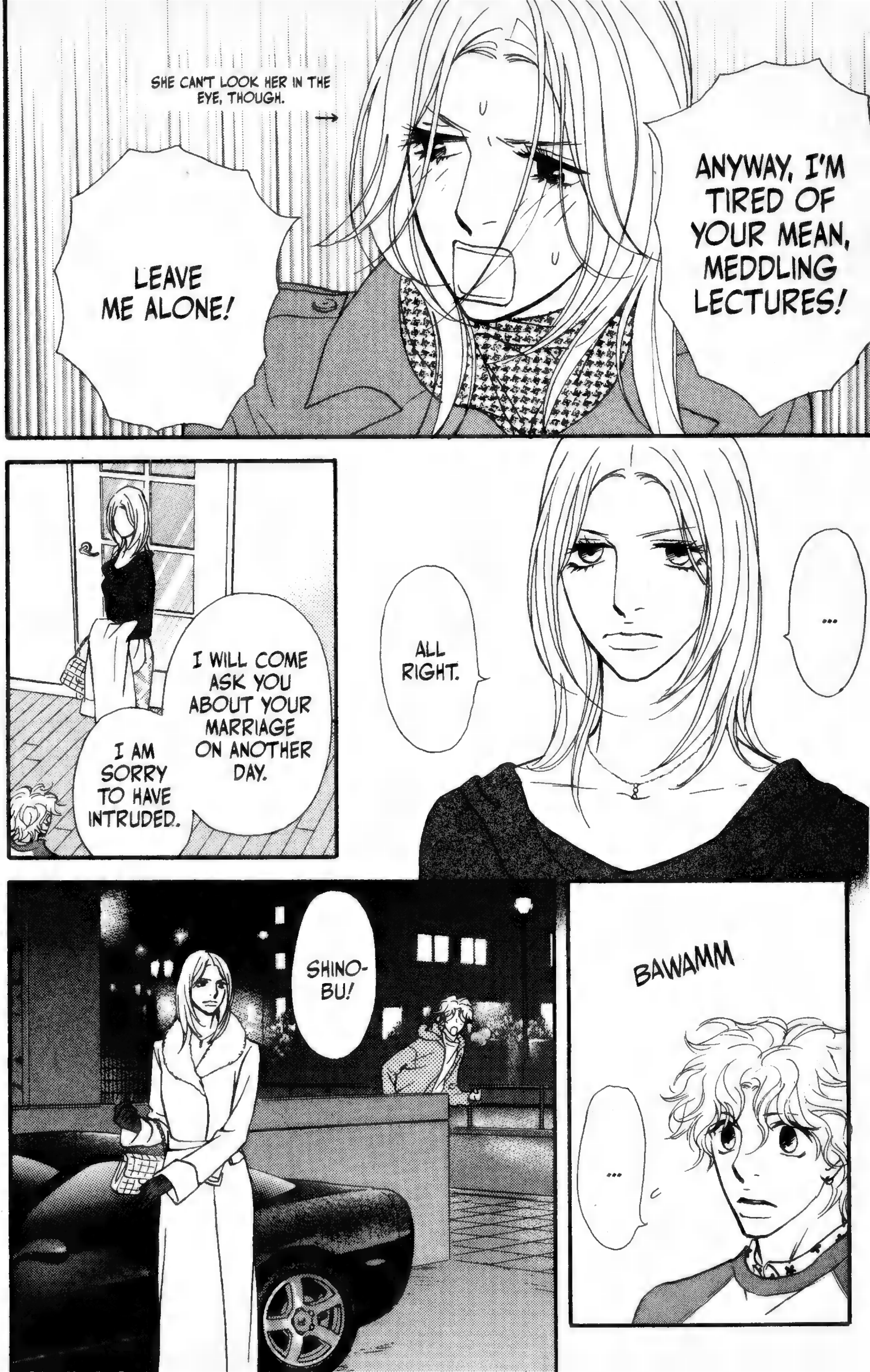
DOES SUMIRE ALWAYS COME HOME SO LATE?
MOMO-SAN?
UMM, NO, SHE'S USUALLY HOME BY NOW, BUT...
...SHE'S PROBABLY TOO SCARED TO COME HOME.
IN A LOW VOICE
IS THAT SO?
EXTRA MAGAZINE
WINTER
FOCUSED ON CARS
BY THE WAY, DO YOU THINK IF YOU ADDED FOUR WHEELS TO A ONE-MAN BLEEDER, YOU COULD REALLY CHANGE THE BRAKE FLUID IN ONE SHOT?
UMM, I ONLY SPEAK JAPANESE...
SORRY.
I'M HOME!
SHINOBU?
SORRY, THINGS KEPT POPPING UP AT WORK AND...

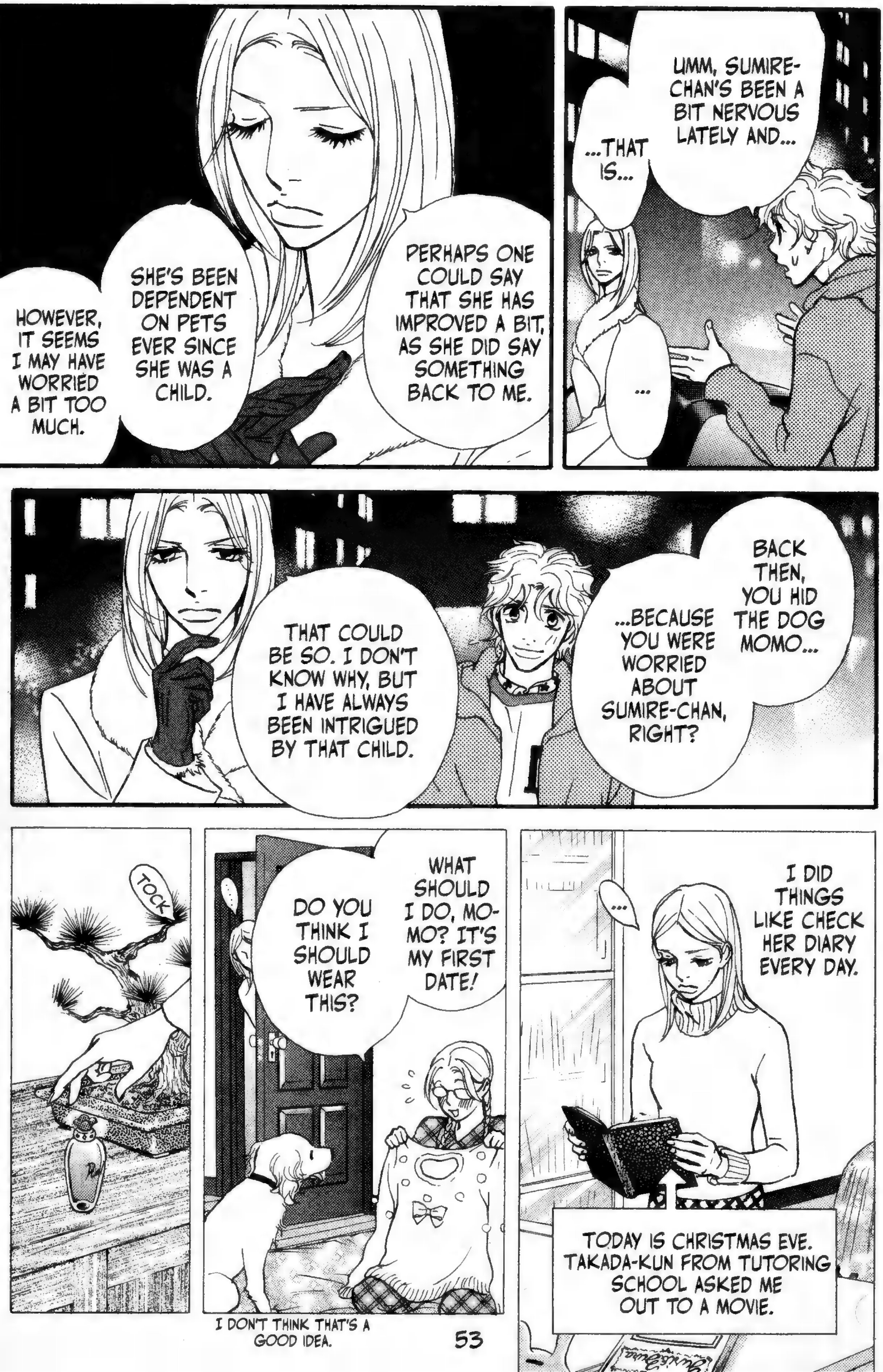

SCHWIRR
DOG STEW
SCHWIRR
DOG STEW
SCHWIRR
DOG STEW
STOP, SHINOBU!
WHAT ARE YOU DO-ING TO MOMO?!



NO, NO!
CALM DOWN, SUMIRE!
HUFF HUFF HAH
MOMO!
DID SHE HURT YOU? ARE YOU OKAY?
I'M OKAY. I'M OKAY.
I WAS JUST GETTING MY HAIR CUT.
HAIR?
YEP. I GOT THIS HUGE TANGLE HERE, SEE?
YOUR BIG SISTER NOTICED IT.
...
I THOUGHT SO.
NOTHING'S CHANGED, HAS IT, SUMIRE-SAN?
AS USUAL, YOU CAN ONLY OPEN YOUR HEART TO A PET.

HOW LONG DO YOU INTEND TO REMAIN A CHILD?
YOU ARE NOT FIT TO BE A CAREER WOMAN. YOU SHOULD GET MARRIED AND HAVE CHILDREN.
AND TO DO THAT, YOU MUST...
...END THIS PLAYING "MASTER" IMMEDIATELY.
SNAP
UH-OH.
THAT'S THE WORST POSSIBLE THING TO BRING UP.
THAT'S--
YOU DON'T HAVE TO TELL ME THAT, SHINOBU. I KNOW THAT ALREADY!
I'VE ALREADY DECIDED TO GET MARRIED AND END THIS LIFESTYLE! SOON!
SO THERE'S NO NEED TO RUB IT IN!


SHE CAN'T LOOK HER IN THE EYE, THOUGH.
ANYWAY, I'M TIRED OF YOUR MEAN, MEDDLING LECTURES!
LEAVE ME ALONE!
...
ALL RIGHT.
I WILL COME ASK YOU ABOUT YOUR MARRIAGE ON ANOTHER DAY.
I AM SORRY TO HAVE INTRUDED.
BAWAMM
...
SHINO-BU!


UMM, SUMIRE-CHAN'S BEEN A BIT NERVOUS LATELY AND...
...THAT IS...
...
PERHAPS ONE COULD SAY THAT SHE HAS IMPROVED A BIT, AS SHE DID SAY SOMETHING BACK TO ME.
SHE'S BEEN DEPENDENT ON PETS EVER SINCE SHE WAS A CHILD.
HOWEVER, IT SEEMS I MAY HAVE WORRIED A BIT TOO MUCH.
BACK THEN, YOU HID THE DOG MOMO...
...BECAUSE YOU WERE WORRIED ABOUT SUMIRE-CHAN, RIGHT?
THAT COULD BE SO. I DON'T KNOW WHY, BUT I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN INTRIGUED BY THAT CHILD.
I DID THINGS LIKE CHECK HER DIARY EVERY DAY.
...
TODAY IS CHRISTMAS EVE. TAKADA-KUN FROM TUTORING SCHOOL ASKED ME OUT TO A MOVIE.
WHAT SHOULD I DO, MO-MO? IT'S MY FIRST DATE!
DO YOU THINK I SHOULD WEAR THIS?
...
I DON'T THINK THAT'S A GOOD IDEA.
TOCK

...
OH, I'LL JUST SNEAK...
...A BIT OF SHINOBU'S PERFUME. ♡
SUMIRE'S LOCKED HERSELF IN HER ROOM SINCE SHE CAME HOME.
SHE PROBABLY CAUGHT A COLD OR SOMETHING.
...
...
TAKADA-KUN TRIED TO TAKE ME INTO A LOVE HOTEL! I CAN'T TRUST BOYS ANYMORE.
スラリ----
IT SEEMS THAT A MIDDLE-SCHOOL BOY FROM A NEIGHBORING TOWN WAS ATTACKED BY A GANG MEMBER WITH A JAPANESE SWORD.
WOW.
SCARY...!
...

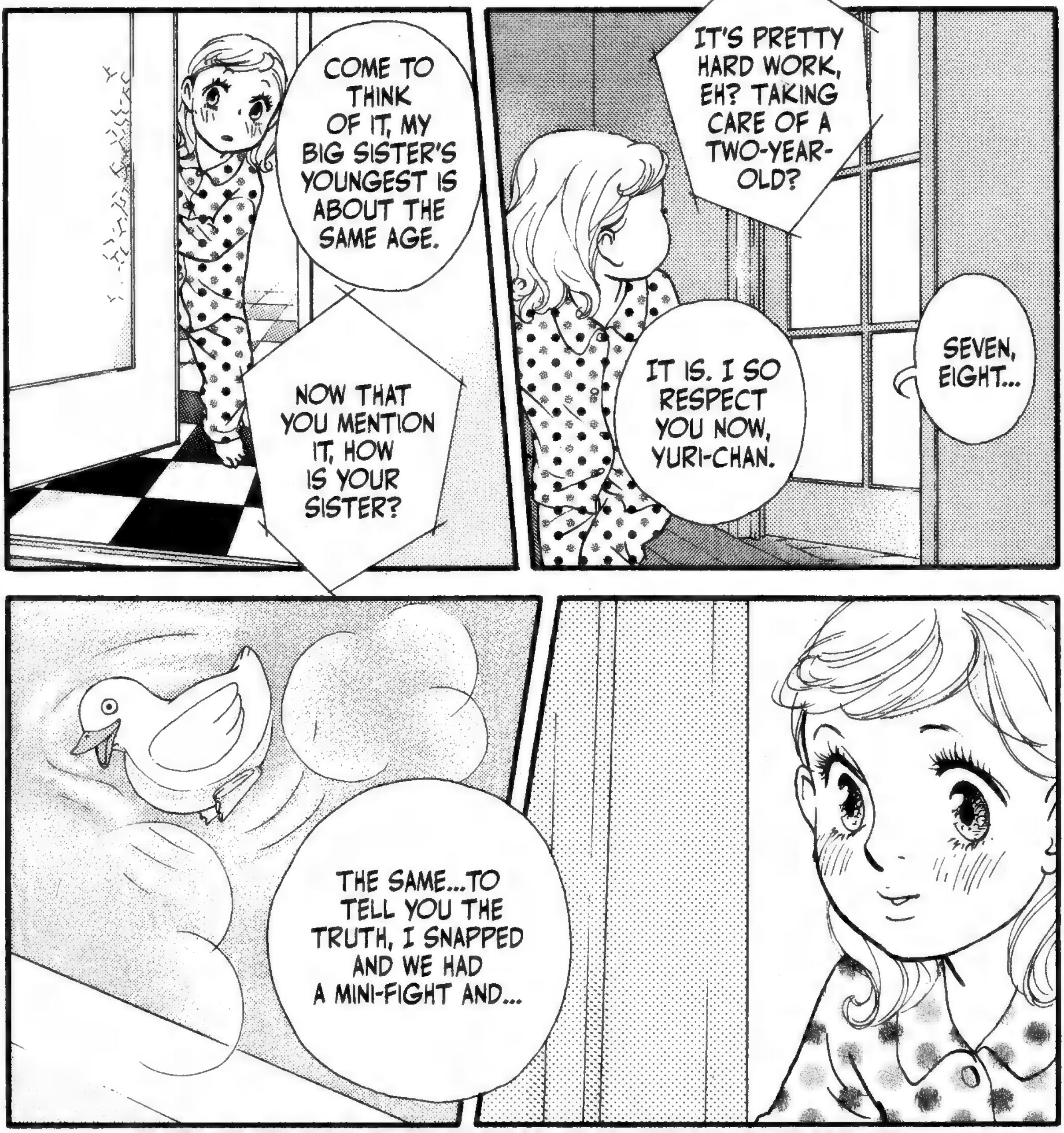
IT MAY HAVE BEEN MEAN AND MEDDLING...
...
SHE REALLY CARES ABOUT HER LITTLE SISTER, BUT...
...SUMIRE-CHAN WOULDN'T UNDERSTAND THAT.
SUMIRE-CHAN, WAKE UP! WAKE UP!
HMM? I DON'T HAVE TO GO TO WORK TODAY, SILLY.
ISN'T RAN-CHAN COMING OVER TODAY?
がば
OH NO! I FORGOT!!!
I THOUGHT SO.

TRY TO KEEP AWAY FROM ALL GRAINS, AND WHEAT IS A NO-NO.
SHE MIGHT NOT REMEMBER TO GO TO THE BATHROOM AT SOMEONE ELSE'S HOUSE, SO HAVE HER WEAR DIAPERS.
OKAY.
WELL, THEN, I'LL GET OUT OF YOUR HAIR!
RAN-CHAN, YOU BE A GOOD GIRL, NOW.
HAVE A GOOD TIME!
HAB A GOO' 'IME!
HEY, TELL HER YOU WANT A LITTLE BROTHER OR SISTER AS A SOUVENIR!
SAY, "TRAIN HIM REALLY WELL," OKAY?
DON'T MAKE HER SAY THAT.
SLAM
WELL, NOW, RAN-CHAN...
...WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE FOR A SNACK? WE HAVE ICE CREAM AND--
UH... UH... UH...

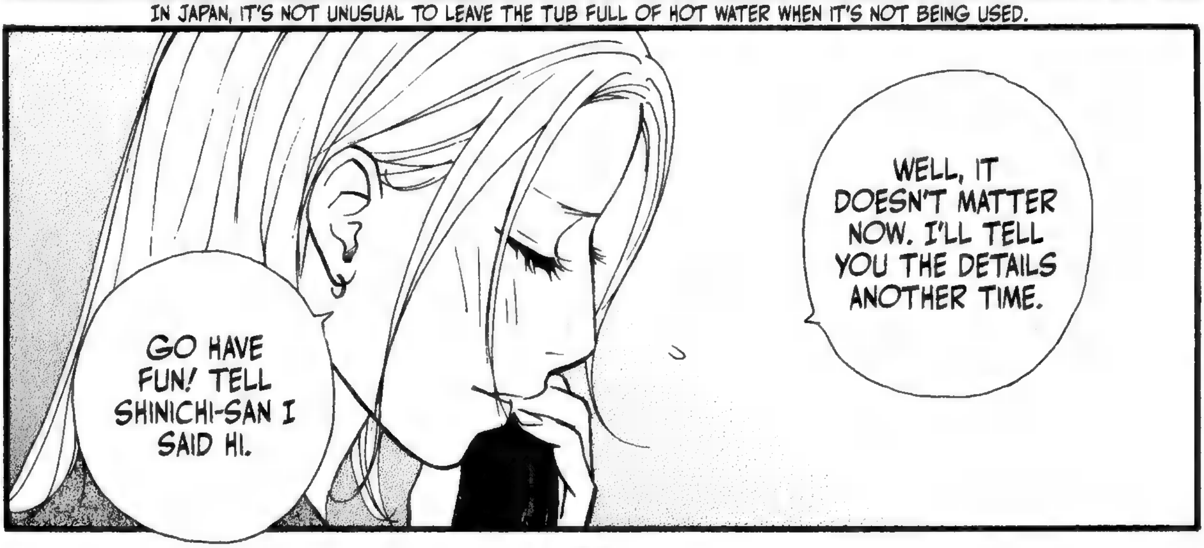
MOMO! DO A TRICK! A TRICK!
UWAAAGH!!
OKAY, IF YOU SAY SO...
MAMA!!!
SHE WAS JUST BEAMING AND SHE EVEN SAID, "HAB A GOO' 'IME!"
BUT, BUT...
IT HAS BEEN A WHILE, BUT, YOU KNOW--!!
YOU MADE HER CRY EVEN MORE!
SCARY!
AAAAHHHH!
I'M SORRY!
SEA MAN.
HAVEN'T SEEN ME SINCE VOLUME ONE!
HEY, SUMIRE-CHAN.

LET'S GO HOME SO THAT SHE DOESN'T GET COLD.
YEP.
I'M GLAD WE TOOK HER OUTSIDE, THOUGH.
RAN-CHAN FELL ASLEEP.
OH.
JUST WHEN I THOUGHT SHE WAS FEELING BETTER.
EXCUSE ME, IS THERE A BUS STOP AROUND HERE?
GO OUT THE EXIT ON THE OTHER SIDE AND YOU'LL SEE IT. IT'S IN FRONT OF THE BAKERY ON THE RIGHT.
HOW OLD IS SHE?
UH... ALMOST THREE.
WELL, THAT'S WHEN THEY'RE AT THEIR CUTEST!
A LOT OF PEOPLE TALK TO YOU WHEN YOU HAVE A KID, HUH?
SO TRUE...

SOME-TIMES I HATE MYSELF.
NO.
THAT WAS A STUPID THOUGHT.
WHAT'S WRONG?
UH...
NOTHING. IT'S NOTHING.
WAIT A MINUTE, OKAY? I'LL PUT HER ON.
OH, THAT'S OKAY, REALLY.
IF SHE HEARS MY VOICE, SHE MIGHT START CRYING AGAIN.
THREE, FOUR.
YEAH, SHE ATE ALL HER FOOD AND TOOK HER BATH ALREADY.
NOW? SHE'S PLAYING HIDE-AND-SEEK WITH MOMO.

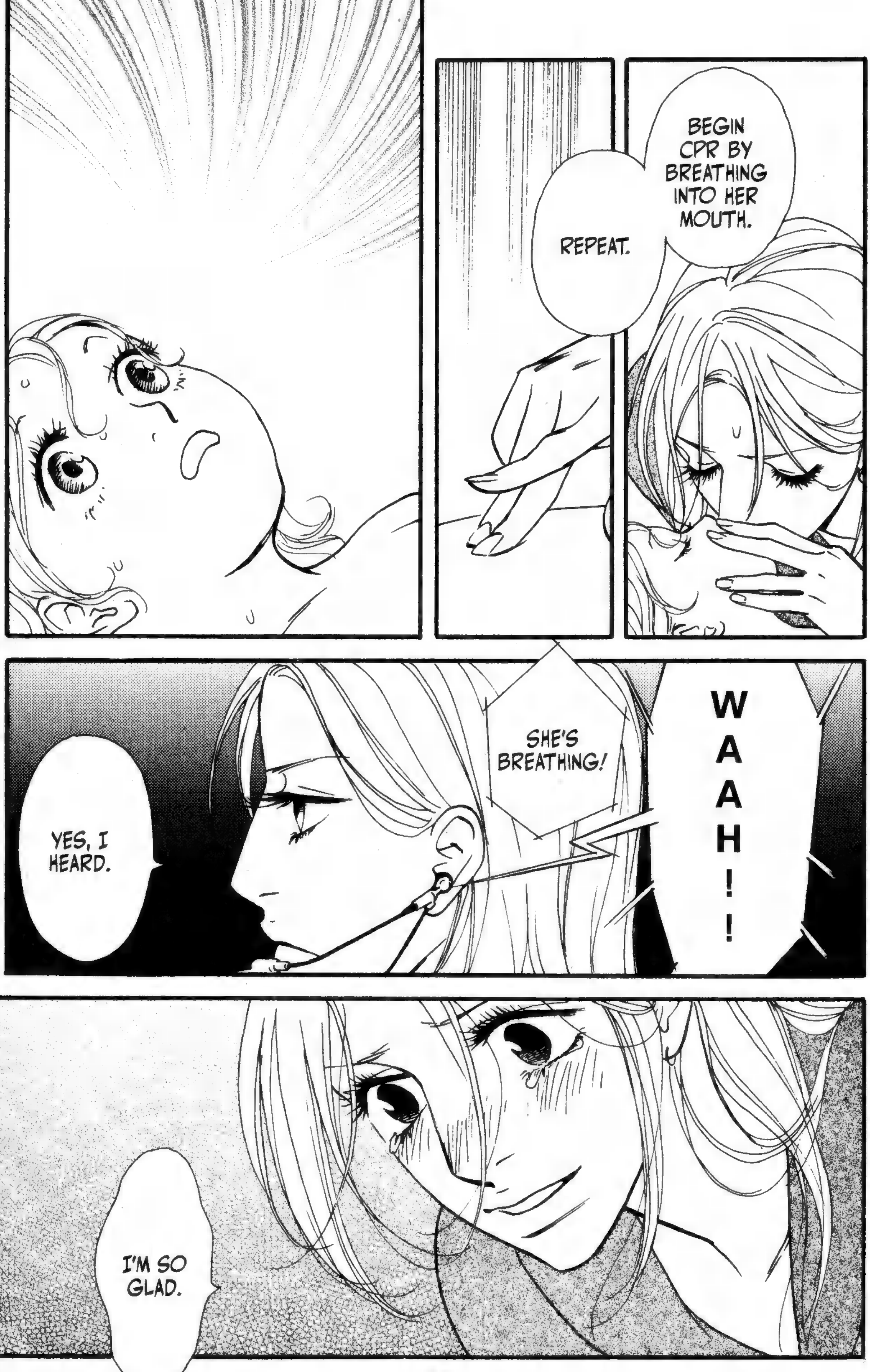


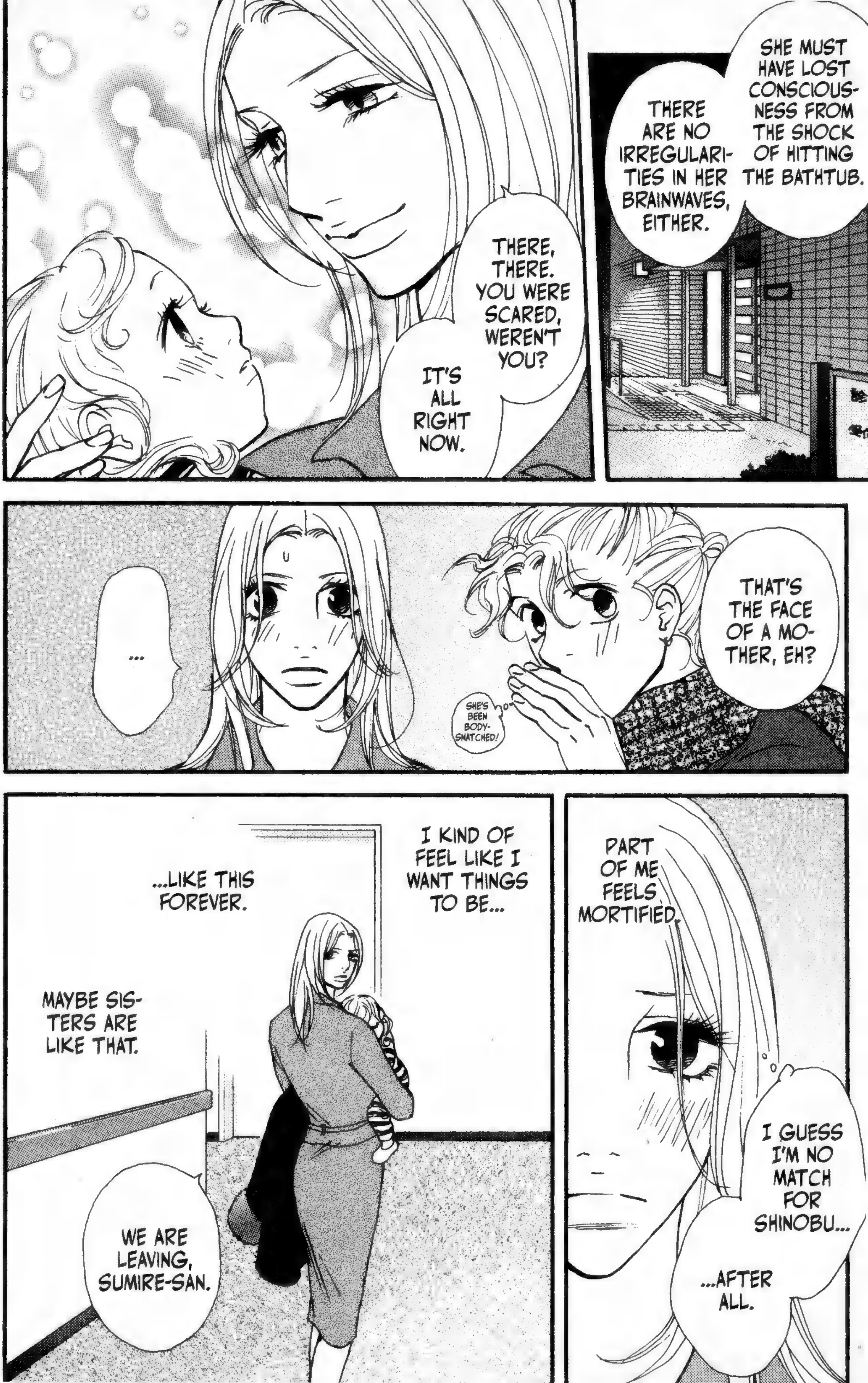
IN JAPAN, IT'S NOT UNUSUAL TO LEAVE THE TUB FULL OF HOT WATER WHEN IT'S NOT BEING USED.



AAHH!
WHAT?
RAN-CHAN FELL INTO THE TUB!!
WHAT?!
MAYBE YOU SHOULD CALL AN AMBULANCE!
BUT THAT'S--
W-W-W-WHY--
RIIING
HELLO? SUMIRE-SAN?
WAAH! SHINOBU, WHAT SHOULD I DO?!
I'M NEARBY, SO I'M COMING OVER.

MY FRIEND'S KID WAS IN THE BATHTUB AND--
I...IT LOOKS LIKE SHE'S NOT BREATHING!
CHILD? HOW OLD?
TWO... NO, NO, ALMOST THREE YEARS.
I CAN'T TALK TO YOU WHILE YOU'RE HYSTERICAL. LET ME TALK TO THE YOUNG MAN.
MOMO-SAN??
BEFORE YOU CALL AN AMBULANCE, HAVE SUMIRE DO AS I TELL YOU.
LAY HER ON HER SIDE AND PUT YOUR FINGER DEEP IN HER MOUTH AND...
...DID SHE COUGH UP WATER?
NO.
SHE MAY NOT HAVE SWALLOWED ANY WATER. NEXT...
LAY HER ON HER BACK AND PLACE THE POINTER FINGER OF YOUR RIGHT HAND IN THE CENTER OF HER CHEST.
...JUST LIKE THAT, PUT YOUR MIDDLE AND RING FINGERS DOWN AND HAVE YOUR POINTER FINGER HOVER OVER AND...
...PRESS STRAIGHT DOWN AT THE RATE OF TWICE A SECOND.


BEGIN CPR BY BREATHING INTO HER MOUTH.
REPEAT.
WAAH!!
SHE'S BREATHING!
YES, I HEARD.
I'M SO GLAD.


SHE MUST HAVE LOST CONSCIOUS-NESS FROM THE SHOCK OF HITTING THE BATHTUB.
THERE ARE NO IRREGULARI-TIES IN HER BRAINWAVES, EITHER.
THERE, THERE. YOU WERE SCARED, WEREN'T YOU?
IT'S ALL RIGHT NOW.
THAT'S THE FACE OF A MO-THER, EH?
SHE'S BEEN BODY-SNATCHED!
...
PART OF ME FEELS MORTIFIED.
I GUESS I'M NO MATCH FOR SHINOBU...
...AFTER ALL.
I KIND OF FEEL LIKE I WANT THINGS TO BE...
...LIKE THIS FOREVER.
MAYBE SIS-TERS ARE LIKE THAT.
WE ARE LEAVING, SUMIRE-SAN.

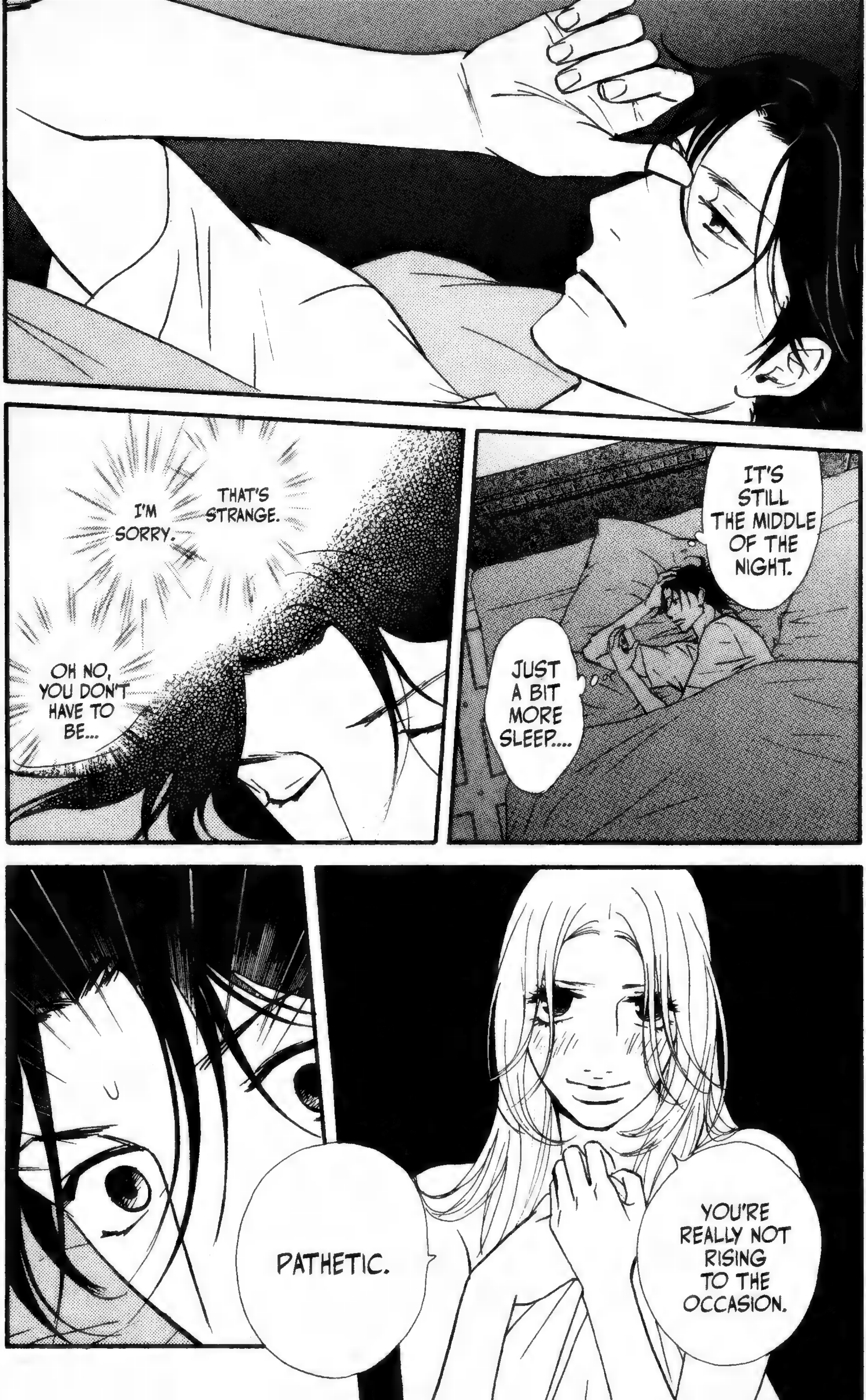
RAN FEWL, YOU KNOW!
SPLATCH!
I'M REALLY SO SORRY.
IT'S ALL RIGHT!
IF YOU HAVE KIDS, THEN YOU HAVE ACCI-DENTS.
IT MADE ME REALIZE THAT I CAN'T BE A MOTHER YET.
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING? YOU'LL BE ABLE TO DO IT.
I THOUGHT SOMETHING WEIRD THE OTHER DAY.
YOU KNOW ...I COULD HAVE HASUMI-SENPAI'S CHILD AND...

...I COULD RAISE IT WITH JUST MOMO AND ME.
YOU KNOW, THAT'S--
I ONLY THOUGHT IT! I KNOW ALREADY! IT'S REALLY STUPID!
CALM DOWN. I'M NOT THINKING OF DOING THAT.
BUT...I REALLY CAN'T PICTURE IT...
...MARRYING SENPAI AND... RAISING A FAMILY WITH HIM.
SUMIRE...
AFTER THAT, ON HER TWELFTH BIRTHDAY, YOU WOULD NOT BELIEVE WHAT SUMIRE...
I SEE...
HOW DID I GET TO BE HER AFTERNOON TEA BUDDY?!
MOMO SOMEHOW BECAME SHINOBU'S FAVORITE.

Le tempe doux

RULE 55:
WOMAN OF THE CANCER SIGN

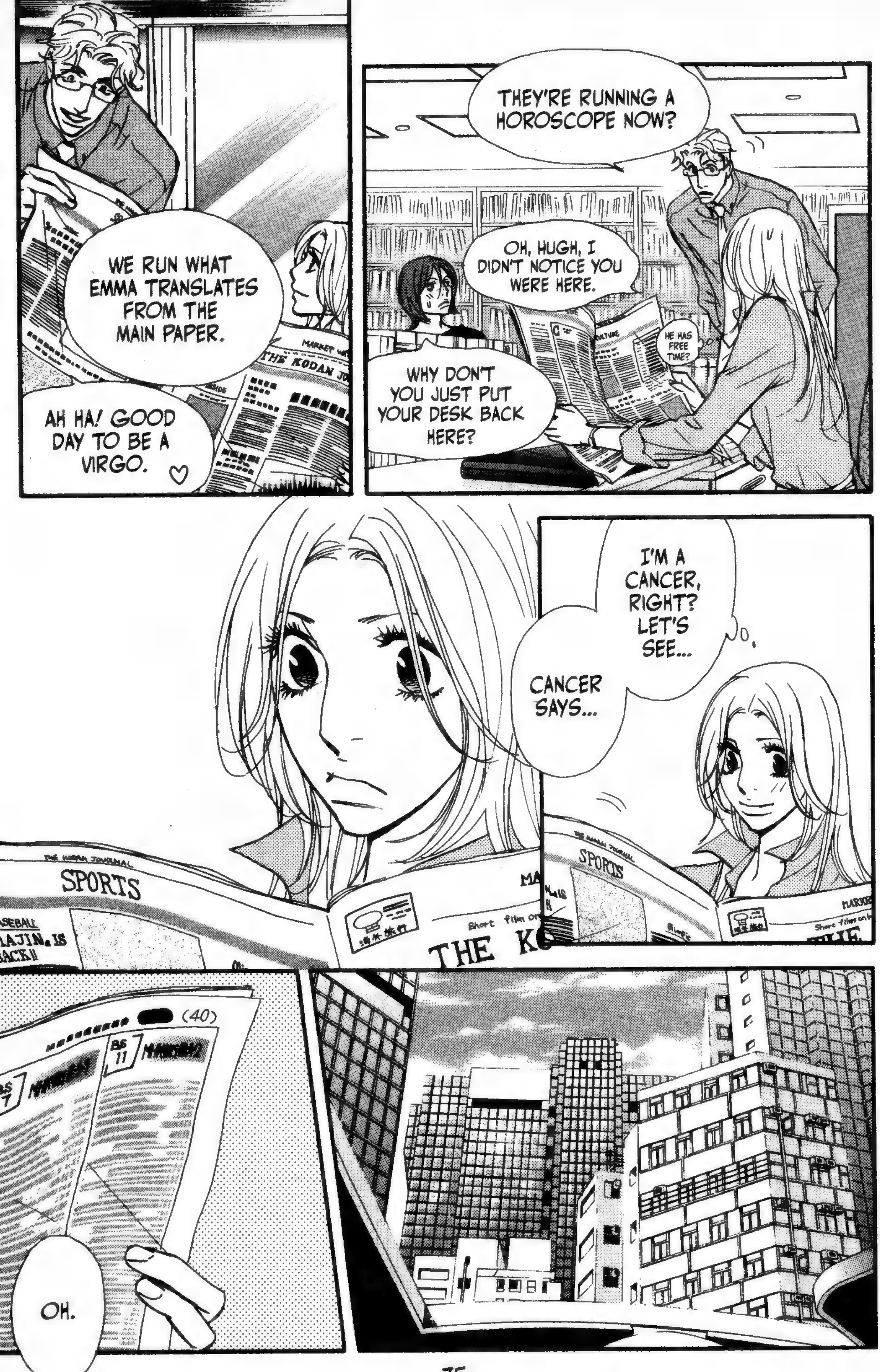
I DREAMED OF YOU...
...SHINING PURE AND WHITE, IN THE DRESS MEANT FOR THE DAY WE ARE TO WED.
IT WAS YOU...
...YET ALSO SOME LONELY SOMEONE ELSE.


IT'S STILL THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT.
JUST A BIT MORE SLEEP....
THAT'S STRANGE.
I'M SORRY.
OH NO, YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE...
YOU'RE REALLY NOT RISING TO THE OCCASION.
PATHETIC.

...
...
SHIT! I CAN'T SLEEP!
MAYBE A DRINK OF WATER WILL HELP.
ZZZ...
ZZZ...
ZZZ...
ZZZ...
I KNOW...
...THAT THIS IS MY BIGGEST HURDLE.

WHY'S SHE COVERING HER HEAD BUT NOT HER BUTT?
SILLY!
MMM...
FLOP
...
IF SHE REALLY WERE A CAT...
...I COULD HAVE ADORED HER.
MORNING HAS BROOOKEN!
MORNING, SUMIRE-CHAN!!
S-SHUT U...

AH...
BUT...
...SOON I WON'T BE ABLE TO MAKE HIM BREAK-FAST.
YOU'VE GOT SO MUCH ENERGY, IT'S LIKE YOU'RE HIGH ON DRUGS. FIRST THING IN THE MORNING.
I'M HUNGRY! FOOD!!
NOT A MORNING PERSON
I SAID SHUT UP.
DRIP
NOTHING...
I'LL MAKE IT RIGHT AWAY, BREAKFAST.
WHAT'S WRONG?
HAVE YOU SEEN THE HOROSCOPES IN THE PAPER?
OH, IT STARTED TO-DAY. LET'S SEE...
AN JOURNAL


THEY'RE RUNNING A HOROSCOPE NOW?
OH, HUGH, I DIDN'T NOTICE YOU WERE HERE.
HE HAS FREE TIME?
WHY DON'T YOU JUST PUT YOUR DESK BACK HERE?
WE RUN WHAT EMMA TRANSLATES FROM THE MAIN PAPER.
AH HA! GOOD DAY TO BE A VIRGO. ♡
I'M A CANCER, RIGHT? LET'S SEE...
CANCER SAYS...
SPORTS
OH.

DID THEY HAVE THIS FEATURE IN THE ENTERTAINMENT SECTION BEFORE?
THE HOROSCOPE, RIGHT? IT'S BEEN THERE SINCE LAST WEEK.
THEY DO SOME PRETTY INTERESTING THINGS WHEN THEY'RE SUPPOSED TO BE REPORTING SERIOUS NEWS.
HASUMI-SAN, WHAT'S YOUR SIGN?
I WAS BORN ON JUNE 22, SO...I'M A CANCER.
"SIGNS POINT TO A CHANGE IN YOUR LIFE, CANCER."
"YOU WILL LOSE SOMETHING OLD AND DEAR IN RETURN FOR SOMETHING NEW."
CHANGE IN MY LIFE...I WONDER IF THAT MEANS MY MARRIAGE?
"SOMETHING OLD AND DEAR"?

COULD THIS GUY BE AN ASSASSIN?

"IN TERMS OF YOUR HEALTH, BEWARE OF ACCIDENTS. FALLING OBJECTS ARE ESPECIALLY DANGEROUS."
NUH...NUH UH...
WELCOME HOME, SUMIRE-CHAN. ♡
...
THAT'S RIGHT...I CAN'T LET THE REST OF MY TIME WITH MOMO...
...BE WASTED!
?
IF THAT'S HOW IT'S GOING TO BE, THEN I'LL THROW MYSELF INTO PLAYING PET!!
WE'RE HAVING FRIED SHRIMP TONIGHT!
YAY! ♡
DARLING, WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR HEAD?!

DINNER'S DONE. YOU'RE EATING, RIGHT?
UH... YEAH..
I WAS WALKING DOWN NATHAN ROAD AND A PART OF A SIGN FELL DOWN AND...
OH NO! THAT AREA'S OLD AND THEY DO A LOT OF CONSTRUC-TION.
WELL, IT'S NO BIG DEAL.
JUST BLOOD.
MAYBE IT MEANT HER...?
BUT SHE'S NOT REALLY OLD OR DEAR...
TUNNEL!

IF YOU GO THROUGH!
HEY, MOMO, DON'T MOVE YOUR HEAD AROUND.
SAY, SUMIRE-CHAN.
WHY ARE YOU WEAR-ING YOUR SHADES AGAIN?
*SONG: "TIGER & DRAGON", CRAZY KEN BAND
WHAT?
NO REASON ...JUST BECAUSE.
I JUST REMEMBERED THAT I HAD SHADES AND...
BUT ISN'T IT HARD TO SEE WITH THEM ON?
SWSH
SEE? THEY'RE ALL FOGGED UP.

*SUMIRE'S "BAD GIRL" ALTER EGO; MOSTLY APPEARS WHEN SHE'S ABOUT TO GO WITH HER CARNAL LUST.

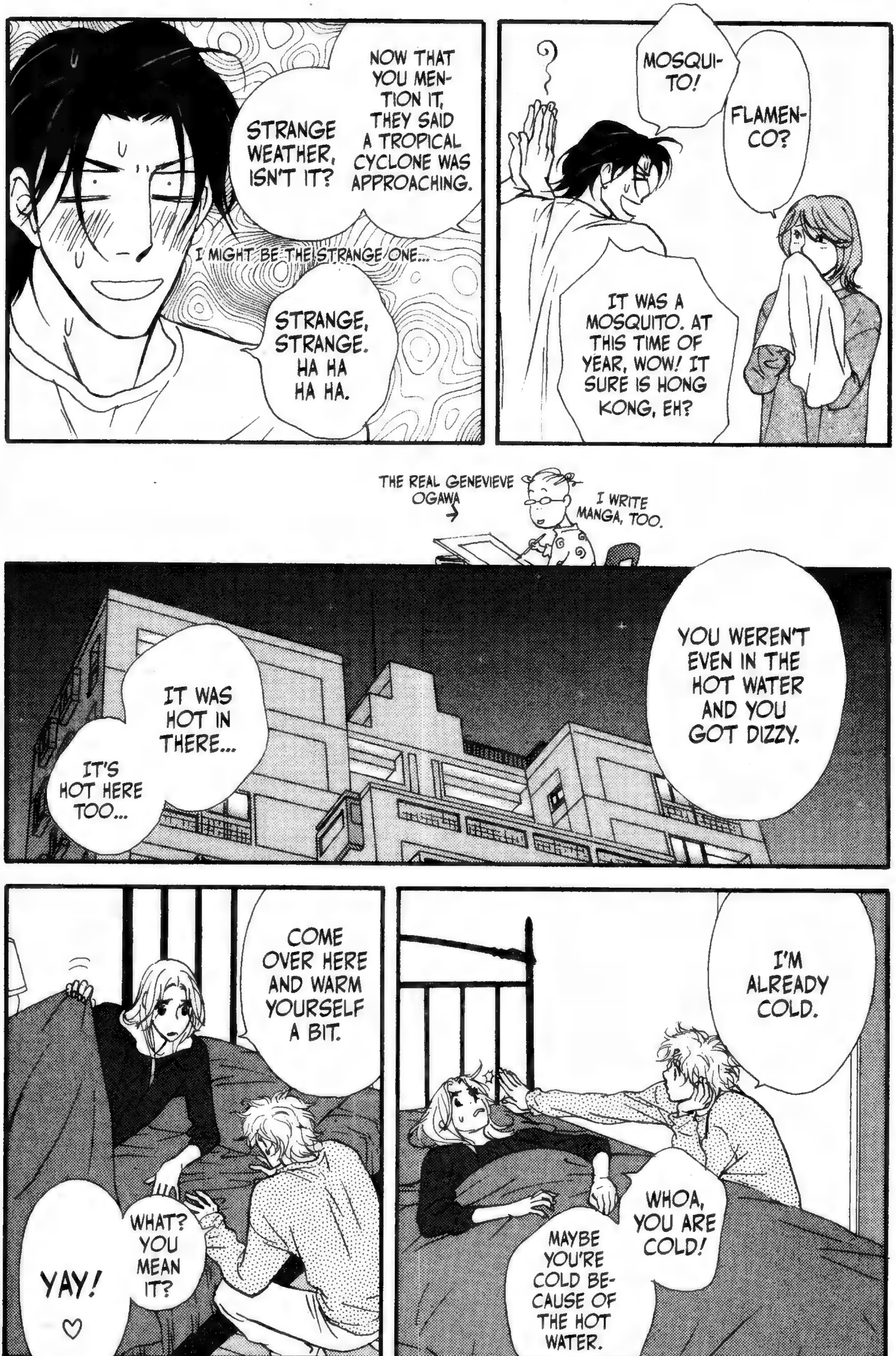
UH...
SUMIRE-CHAN!
SPLAT
ITS IMPOSSIBLE.
WHY AM I FREAKING OUT OVER SUCH A SILLY IDEA?
JUST WHEN I DECIDED TO MAKE MY TIME WITH MOMO MEANINGFUL...
THIS ISN'T GOOD.
I COULDN'T TELL HER TODAY, EITHER...

THAT WAS QUITE A SHOCK, WASN'T IT?

THUMP
THUMP
THUMP
I CAN'T SLEEP.
SCRUB
SCRUB
SHE'S STILL AWAKE THIS LATE?

EEEEK!
WHA... WHA?
WHY'D YOU WAKE UP?!
I THOUGHT YOU WERE ASLEEP! REALLY!
WHAT'S WRONG? DID SOME-THING HAPPEN TO YOUR FACE?
I'M FINE, SO GET OUT ALREADY!
DON'T LOOK AT ME ANYMORE.
I JUST DON'T WANT YOU TO SEE MY FACE WITHOUT MAKEUP.
ドキュー

WHA...
WHAT?
THUMP
THUMP
WHAT'S GOING ON?
SHE'S ADORABLE!!
DID I JUST THINK THAT?
THUMP
THUMP
GENEVIEVE OGAWA, HOROSCOPE FAIRY!
SIGNS POINT TO A CHANGE IN YOUR LIFE, CANCER.
YOU WILL LOSE SOMETHING OLD AND DEAR IN RETURN FOR SOMETHING NEW.
SOMETHING NEW THAT IS, IN SHORT...
FUKU--
SMASH

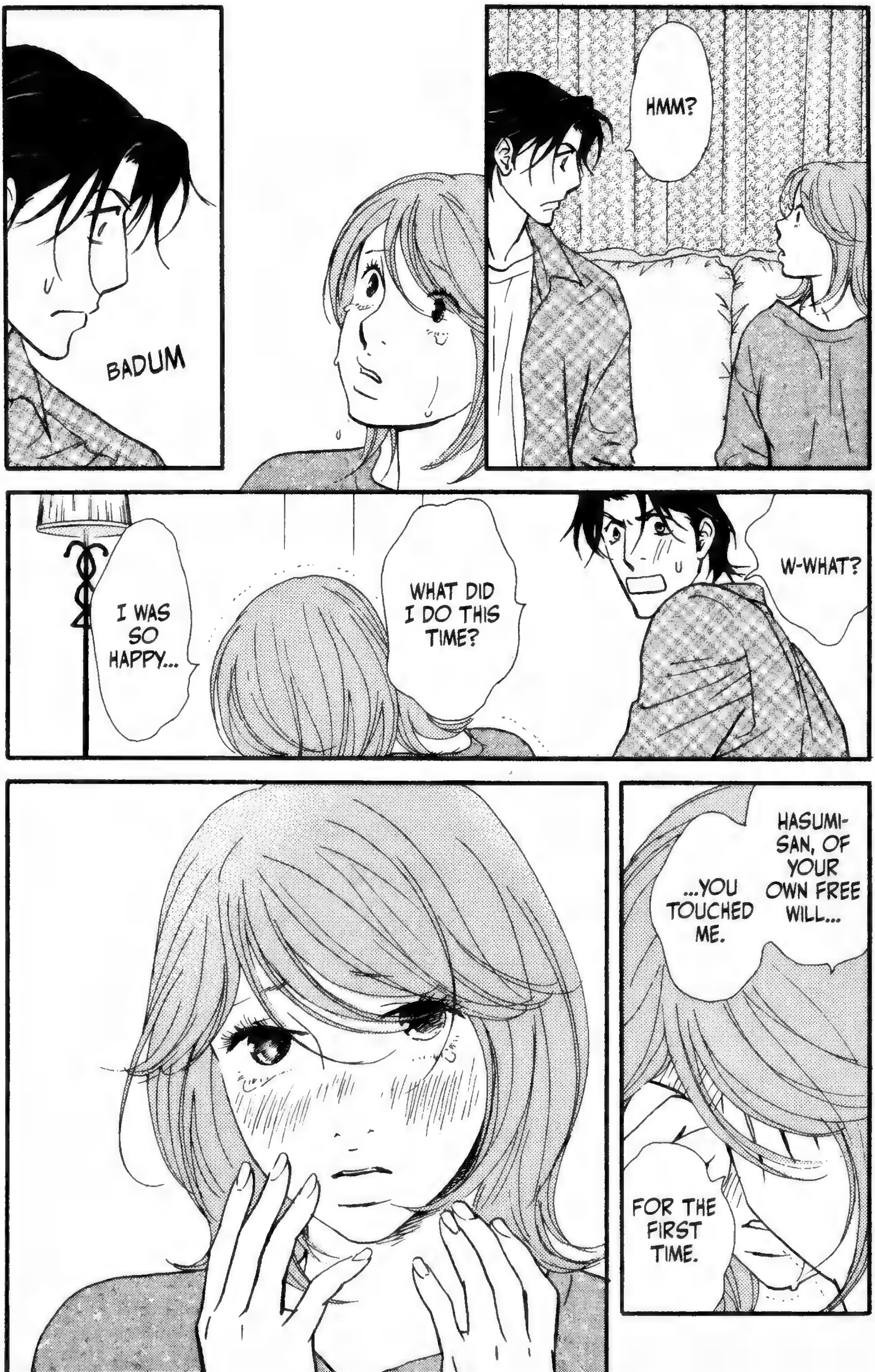

NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT, THEY SAID A TROPICAL CYCLONE WAS APPROACHING.
STRANGE WEATHER, ISN'T IT?
I MIGHT BE THE STRANGE ONE...
STRANGE, STRANGE. HA HA HA HA.
MOSQUITO!
FLAMENCO?
IT WAS A MOSQUITO. AT THIS TIME OF YEAR, WOW! IT SURE IS HONG KONG, EH?
THE REAL GENEVIEVE OGAWA
I WRITE MANGA, TOO.
YOU WEREN'T EVEN IN THE HOT WATER AND YOU GOT DIZZY.
IT WAS HOT IN THERE...
IT'S HOT HERE TOO...
I'M ALREADY COLD.
WHOA, YOU ARE COLD!
MAYBE YOU'RE COLD BECAUSE OF THE HOT WATER.
COME OVER HERE AND WARM YOURSELF A BIT.
WHAT? YOU MEAN IT?
YAY! ♡

BADUM
OH, IT'S SO WARM! ♡
SQUEEZE
くるっ
S-SOMETHING IS DEFINITELY WRONG.
THUMP
THUMP
SUMIRE-CHAN?
ACK!
THUMP
THUMP
...WHAT?

WHAT'S WITH THIS REACTION? ♡
WHAT'S WRONG?
WHEN SHE ACTS LIKE THIS...
WHY? WHY CAN'T I ACT NORMAL?
BITE
WAI--

IT'S NOT A KISS, YOU KNOW.
IT'S A LOVE BITE. ♡
THUMP
IS THAT...
THUMP
THE SMILE OF VICTORY
GRIN
CLICK
CLICK
CLICK

KRSCHHH
EEK!
WHAT AWFUL THUNDER!
IT'S PRETTY CLOSE NOW, ISN'T IT?
IT'S NOT EVEN THE RIGHT SEASON.
WORKING, BECAUSE HE CAN'T SLEEP...
YOU AREN'T SCARED, ARE YOU?
OF COURSE NOT. BUT... IT'S AN AWFUL SOUND, ISN'T IT?
SHE'S SHAKING JUST LIKE A DOG.
HERE. IT'S OKAY.
SQUEEZE


HMM?
BADUM
W-WHAT?
WHAT DID I DO THIS TIME?
I WAS SO HAPPY...
HASUMI-SAN, OF YOUR OWN FREE WILL...
...YOU TOUCHED ME.
FOR THE FIRST TIME.

ズキューン
UH..
PLEASE TOUCH ME SOME MORE.
HEY, HEY!
HEY!!!!
OF COURSE, SHE'S NOT WEARING A BRA.

IT'S A MIS-TAKE! A MIS-TAKE!
WHAT AM I DOING GETTING "HAPPY" NOW?!
OR MAY-BE...
...IT'S NOT A MISTAKE?
THAT HORO-SCOPE...
IS THIS WHAT IT MEANT?
IT COULDN'T BE...BUT MAYBE...

JUST LIKE THIS...
RING ...
FLASH
BOOOOM
EEK!

RINNNNG
YES?!
WHOA!
YES?!
YES?!
YES?!
THERE'S A PHONE IN THE BEDROOM.
HELLO... YES? OH... FROM THE SECURITY COMPANY...
PARKING LOT?
YES, THAT IS COR-RECT, BUT...
WHAT?!!
DARLING, OVER THERE!
WHAT?
SMOKE, FROM YOUR LAPTOP!
FIZZLE
THERE MUST HAVE BEEN A POWER SURGE BECAUSE OF THE LIGHTNING!
I HADN'T BACKED IT UP YET!

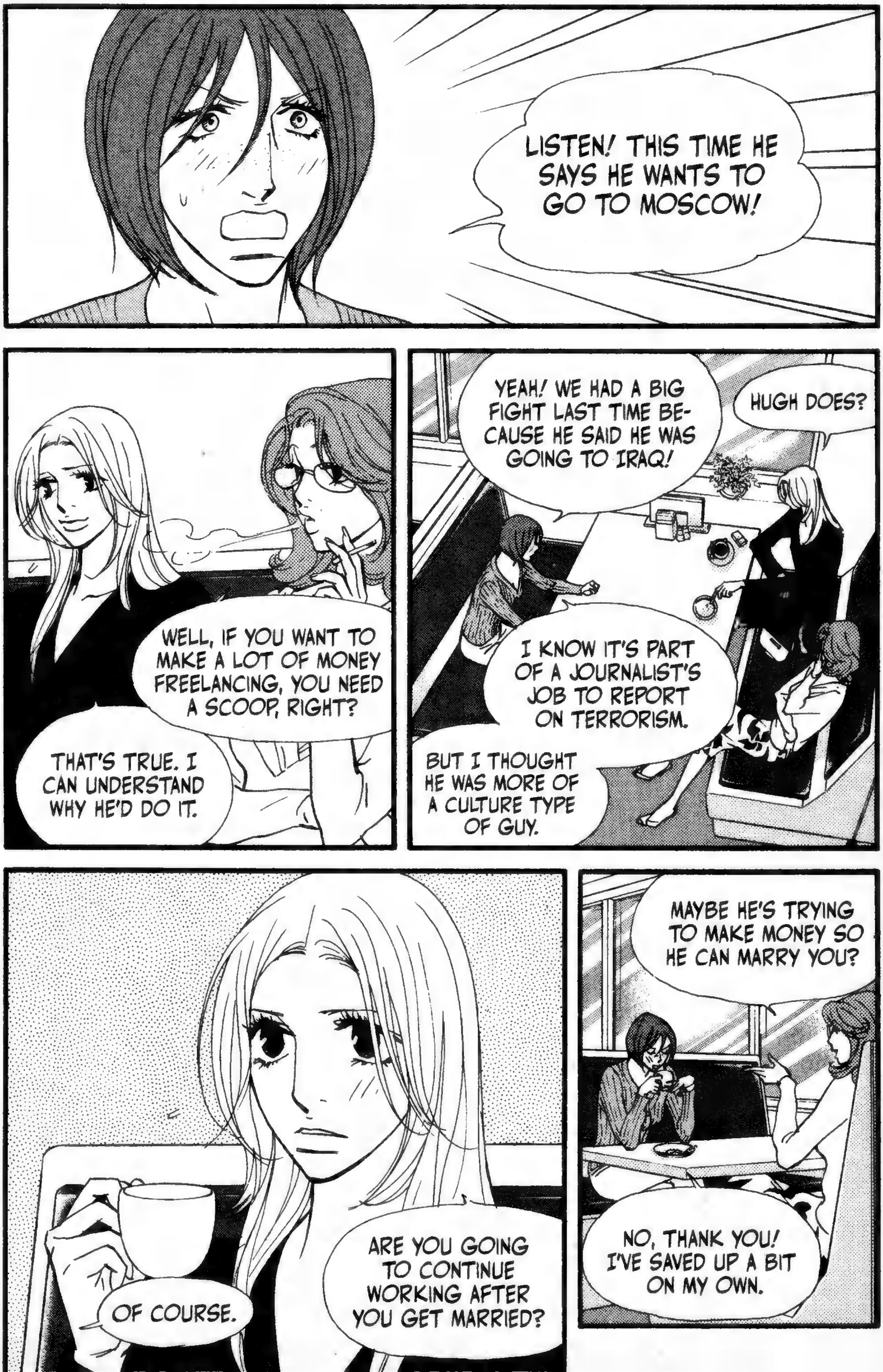
I THOUGHT I WAS STEPPING ON THE BRAKE AND...
...I'M SO SORRY! I HAVE NO INSURANCE SO I WILL PAY FOR THE DAMAGES!!
...
THE HAND-ME-DOWN COR-VETTE FROM SHINOBU...
SUMIRE, GET A HOLD OF YOURSELF!
WELL, DON'T THINK THAT YOU'RE GET-TING A NEW CAR FOR FREE.
OH, I KNOW. INSUR-ANCE IS REALLY COMPLICATED.
"YOU WILL LOSE SOME-THING OLD AND DEAR IN RETURN FOR SOME-THING NEW." I SEE...

巷談新聞
...AND I'D JUST FINISHED PUTTING A BRAND-NEW OPERATING SYSTEM ON IT.
NOW, NOW, THE NEW MACHINES ARE PRETTY NICE, TOO, YOU KNOW.
WAS THAT MY "SOMETHING OLD AND DEAR"?
I'M GLAD I DIDN'T JUMP TO CONCLUSIONS!
UMINO MODERNDANCE STUDIO
WOW! SO YOU FINALLY DECIDED TO MOVE OUT.

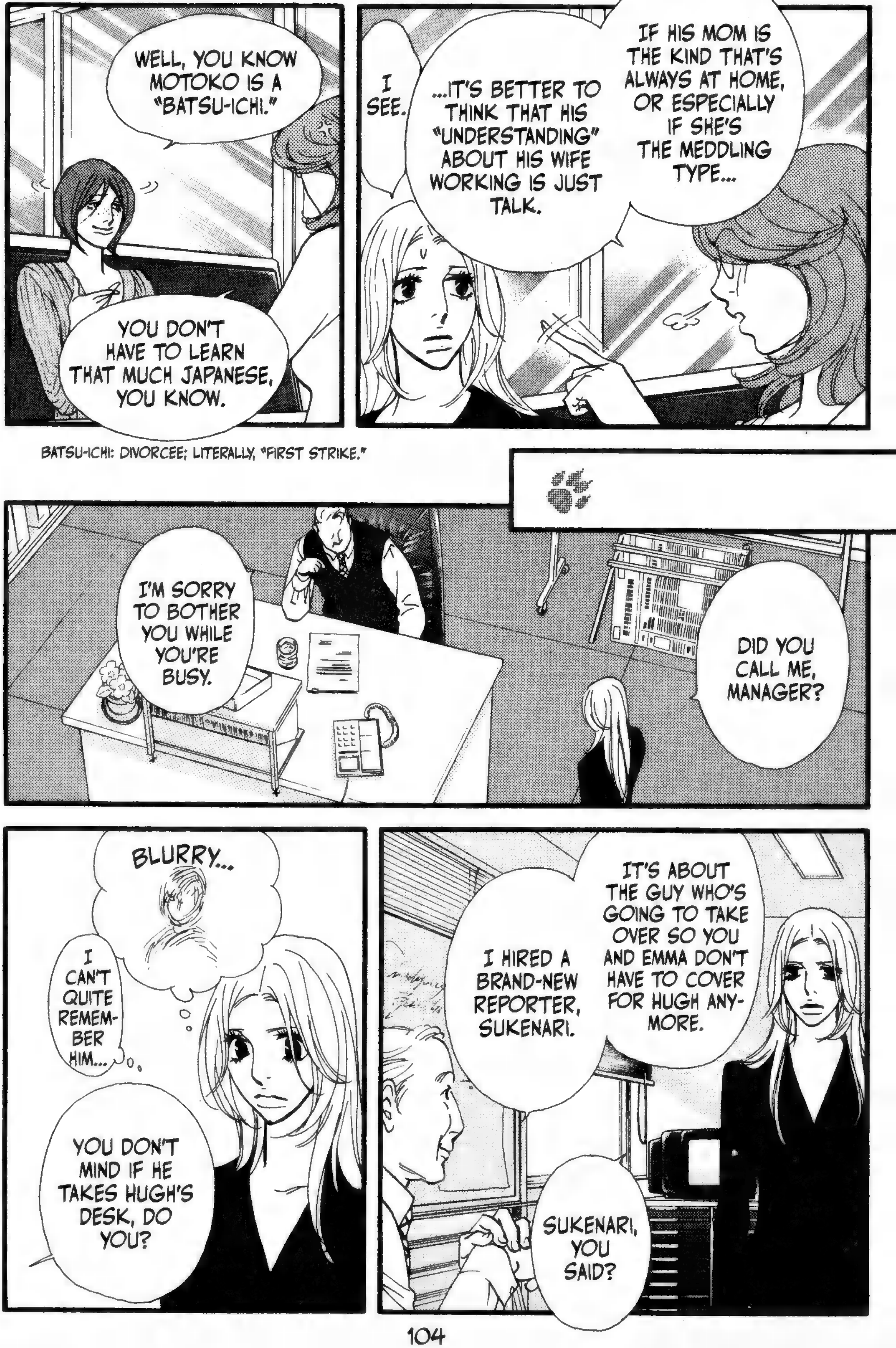
UMM, WELL, NOT RIGHT AWAY, THOUGH.
YOU'VE BEEN THERE A LONG TIME, HAVEN'T YOU?
WHAT'RE YOU GO-ING TO DO NEXT? LOOK FOR A NEW MASTER?
HEH.
AS IF. I'M NOT GOING TO BE KEPT ANYMORE...
...BY ANYONE.
THAT'S RIGHT, I HEARD FROM RUMI-CHAN...
...THAT YOU'RE TRYING TO GO TO BELGIUM.
HUH?!
WHAT'S WITH THE INFORMA-TION LEAK?
NO! UMINO IS ONLY KINDA SORTA AT FAULT.
YOU HAVE TO FIGURE IT WAS RUMI-CHAN, YOU KNOW. HE TRIED TO COVER IT UP, BUT...
IT'S NOT LIKE IT'S DE-CIDED.
THAT PLACE WITH THE CHOR-EOGRAPHY COURSE...
...IT LOOKS LIKE I'LL BE ABLE GET IN NEXT YEAR, EVEN WITHOUT TAKING THE PRERE-QUISITES.

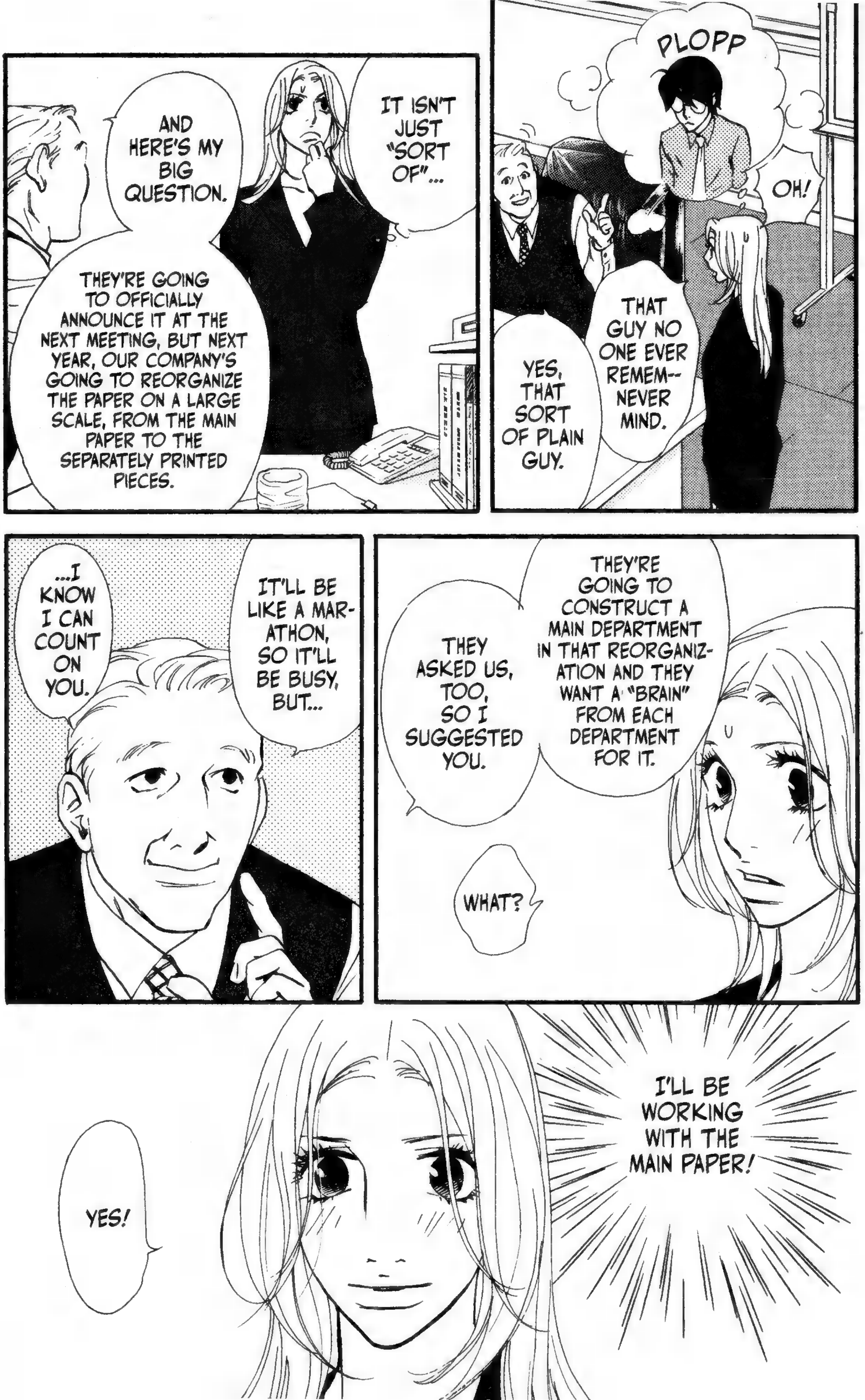
I HEARD, I HEARD.
AND AT THE SAME TIME, YOU COULD KINDA SORTA BE A DANCER IN THE COMPANY, UNDER THEIR DIRECT MANAGEMENT?
THE COMPANY IS CALLED "ROTAS," RIGHT? THAT'S AMAZING! I'LL GO AND SEE YOU ON STAGE.
YOU KNOW TOO MUCH!
IT'S NOT JUST "KINDA SORTA," YOU KNOW.
DON'T RUSH ME TOO MUCH, OKAY?
I JUST STARTED REHAB.
REHAB?
YEAH, I HAVE TO BREAK AN ADDICTION....
...SO I CAN LEARN TO SURVIVE ON MY OWN.

RULE 56:
KOTOBUKI-TAISHA


LISTEN! THIS TIME HE SAYS HE WANTS TO GO TO MOSCOW!
HUGH DOES?
YEAH! WE HAD A BIG FIGHT LAST TIME BE-CAUSE HE SAID HE WAS GOING TO IRAQ!
I KNOW IT'S PART OF A JOURNALIST'S JOB TO REPORT ON TERRORISM.
BUT I THOUGHT HE WAS MORE OF A CULTURE TYPE OF GUY.
WELL, IF YOU WANT TO MAKE A LOT OF MONEY FREELANCING, YOU NEED A SCOOP, RIGHT?
THAT'S TRUE. I CAN UNDERSTAND WHY HE'D DO IT.
MAYBE HE'S TRYING TO MAKE MONEY SO HE CAN MARRY YOU?
NO, THANK YOU! I'VE SAVED UP A BIT ON MY OWN.
ARE YOU GOING TO CONTINUE WORKING AFTER YOU GET MARRIED?
OF COURSE.

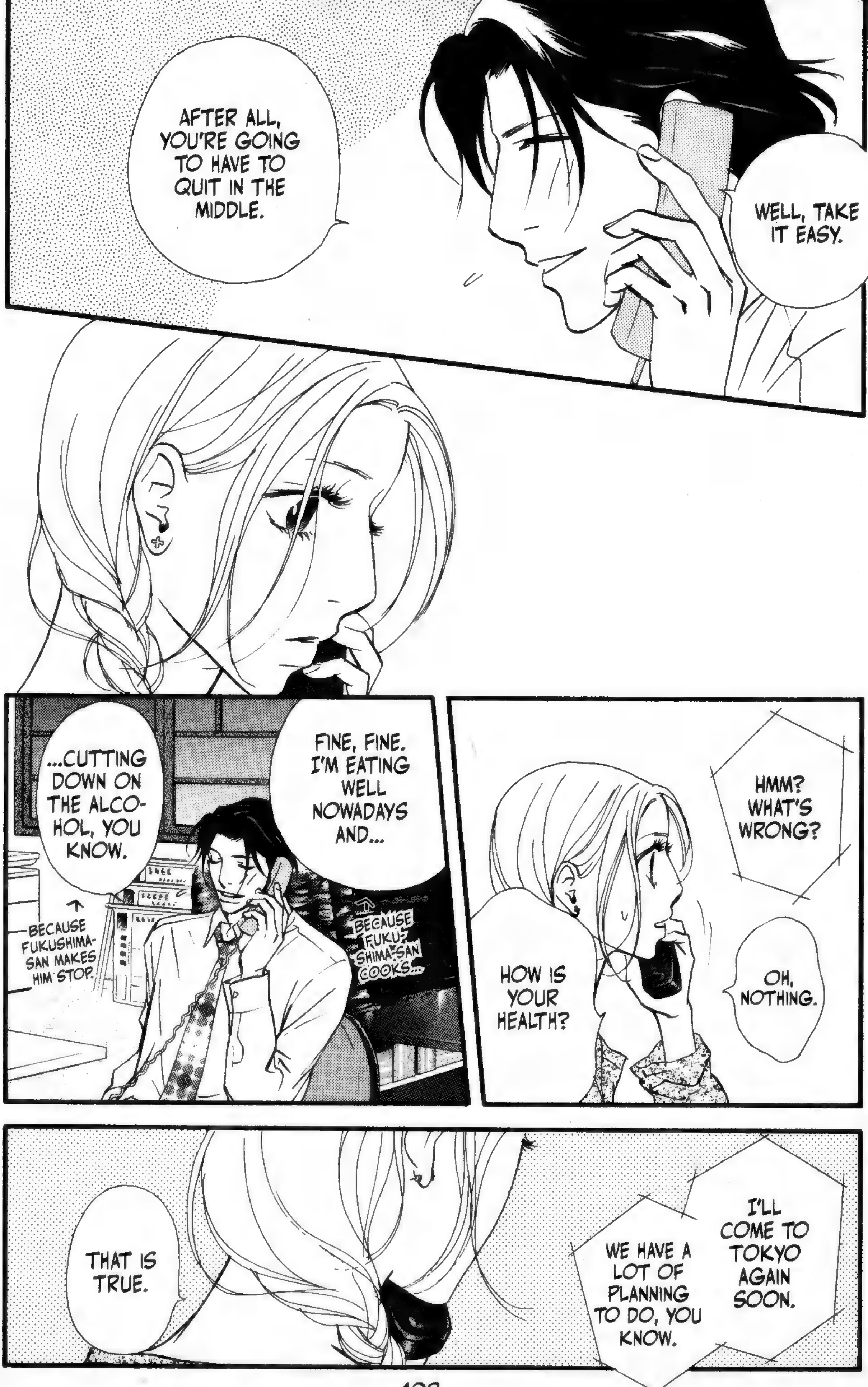
I GREW UP IN A HOUSEHOLD WHERE BOTH MY PARENTS WORKED, SO IT'S NORMAL TO ME.
THOUGH I AM INTERESTED IN THE JAPANESE TERM FOR QUITTING THE WORKFORCE TO MARRY, "KOTOBUKI-TAISHA."
NOW THAT I THINK OF IT, IWAYA-SAN, DON'T YOU HAVE A BOYFRIEND?
HAVE YOU HAD ANY CONFLICTS OVER MARRIAGE AND WORK?
HM?
UH... NO.
IT'S NOT REALLY A CONFLICT.
HE DID SAY THAT HE DIDN'T MIND IF I CONTINUED WORKING, AND...
OH, HE UNDERSTANDS, DOES HE?
YES...IT'S JUST THAT HE'S OVERSEAS, SO... REALISTICALLY, I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO.
HONG KONG, RIGHT? IT'S CLOSE ENOUGH THAT YOU CAN COME AND GO ON THE WEEKENDS.
AS LONG AS HE'S COOPERATIVE, THERE'S LOTS OF WAYS TO DEAL WITH IT.
HOW DO YOU KNOW?
THAT'S TRUE.
ONLY, YOU HAVE TO BE CAREFUL. WHAT HE SAYS ISN'T NECESSARILY HOW HE REALLY FEELS.
LOOK TO HIS FAMILY TO SEE WHAT HE REALLY EXPECTS.


WELL, YOU KNOW MOTOKO IS A "BATSU-ICHI."
YOU DON'T HAVE TO LEARN THAT MUCH JAPANESE, YOU KNOW.
I SEE.
...IT'S BETTER TO THINK THAT HIS "UNDERSTANDING" ABOUT HIS WIFE WORKING IS JUST TALK.
IF HIS MOM IS THE KIND THAT'S ALWAYS AT HOME, OR ESPECIALLY IF SHE'S THE MEDDLING TYPE...
BATSU-ICHI: DIVORCEE; LITERALLY, "FIRST STRIKE."
I'M SORRY TO BOTHER YOU WHILE YOU'RE BUSY.
DID YOU CALL ME, MANAGER?
IT'S ABOUT THE GUY WHO'S GOING TO TAKE OVER SO YOU AND EMMA DON'T HAVE TO COVER FOR HUGH ANYMORE.
I HIRED A BRAND-NEW REPORTER, SUKENARI.
SUKENARI, YOU SAID?
BLURRY...
I CAN'T QUITE REMEMBER HIM...
YOU DON'T MIND IF HE TAKES HUGH'S DESK, DO YOU?

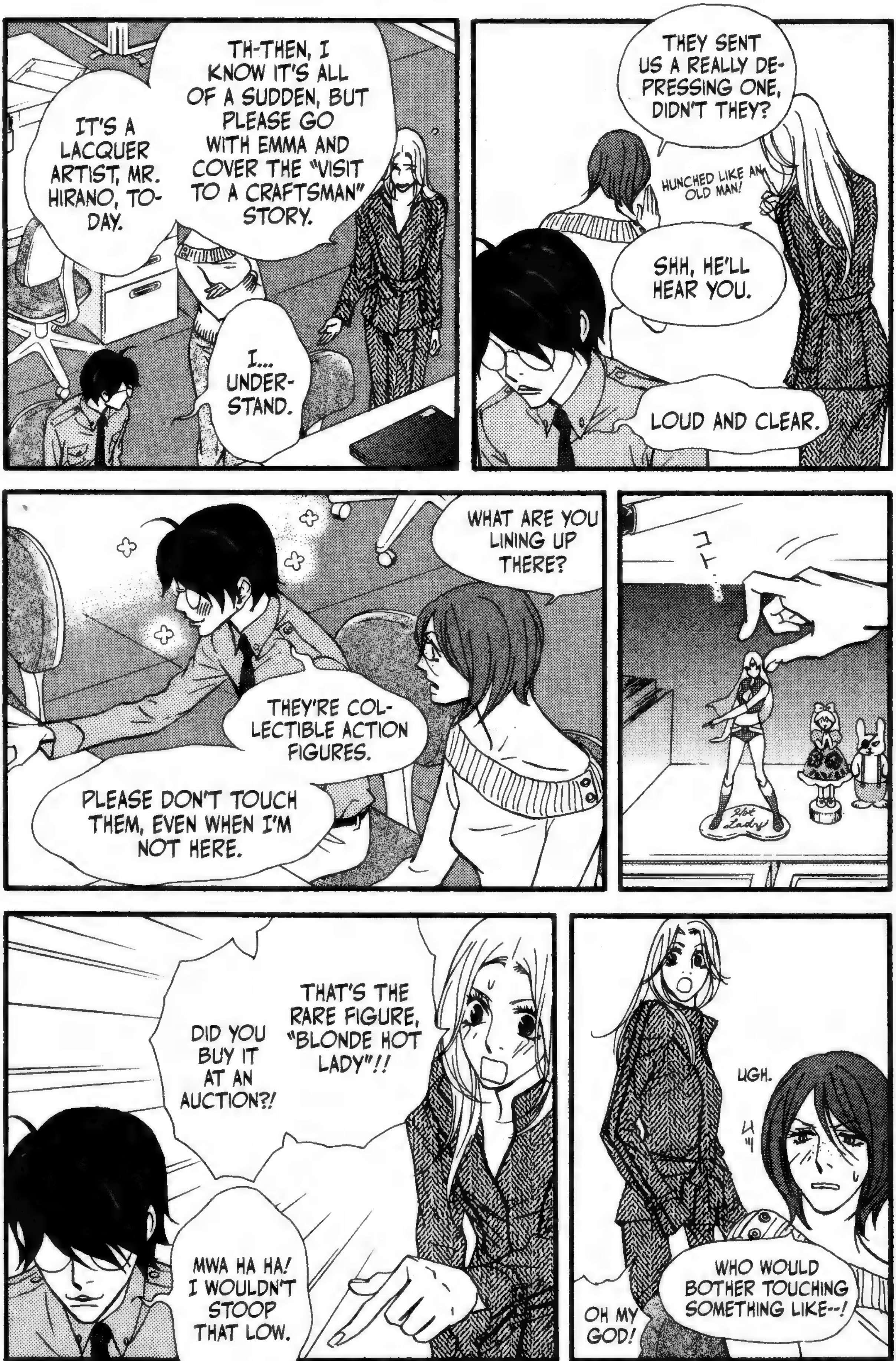

PLOPP
OH!
THAT GUY NO ONE EVER REMEM-- NEVER MIND.
YES, THAT SORT OF PLAIN GUY.
IT ISN'T JUST "SORT OF"...
AND HERE'S MY BIG QUESTION.
THEY'RE GOING TO OFFICIALLY ANNOUNCE IT AT THE NEXT MEETING, BUT NEXT YEAR, OUR COMPANY'S GOING TO REORGANIZE THE PAPER ON A LARGE SCALE, FROM THE MAIN PAPER TO THE SEPARATELY PRINTED PIECES.
THEY'RE GOING TO CONSTRUCT A MAIN DEPARTMENT IN THAT REORGANIZ-ATION AND THEY WANT A "BRAIN" FROM EACH DEPARTMENT FOR IT.
THEY ASKED US, TOO, SO I SUGGESTED YOU.
WHAT?
IT'LL BE LIKE A MAR-ATHON, SO IT'LL BE BUSY, BUT...
...I KNOW I CAN COUNT ON YOU.
I'LL BE WORKING WITH THE MAIN PAPER!
YES!

I DIDN'T EVEN CONSIDER IT WHEN I WAS IN INTERNATIONAL NEWS.
I'M EXCITED!
THEN IT'S WORK WORTH DOING, ISN'T IT?
WELL, YEAH.
MOMO, DO YOU HAVE ANY SUGGESTIONS FOR THE REORGANIZATION? THINGS IN THE PAPER THAT ARE HARD TO READ, OR SOMETHING?
I JUST READ MANGA.
SO NO?
HOW ABOUT SOMETHING LIKE THIS?
In an effort to strengthen counter-measures against violent crimes, Minister of Justice Nozawa questioned the legislative inquiry commission regarding ■ principal reform proposal of the legal sentencing that is the pillar of the penal code and criminal procedure code.
TO
Some guy named Nozawa told some VIPs that, like, there should be like way more punishments for super-mega bad guys, you know?
AN ARTICLE THAT ANY IDIOT COULD READ.
WHAT IS THIS, THE O.C. OR SOMETHING?
THEN HOW ABOUT INCLUDING A LIFE-SIZED PIN-UP OF A HOT ACTRESS LIKE EIKO KOIKE?
I GET IT. ENOUGH. I WAS WRONG TO ASK YOU.
RINNNG
SHOO!

HEL-LO?
OH.
UM, PLEASE WAIT A MOMENT. I WILL TRANSFER THE CALL TO THE OTHER HANDSET..
PUT MANGA ON EVERY PAGE...
WOW, A REORGAN-IZATION.
NO, NO, IT'S GREAT! YOU'RE FINALLY BEING REWARDED FOR ALL YOUR HARD WORK.
AT WORK...(YUCK)
KANEKO-SAN REALLY HAS CON-FIDENCE IN YOU, DOESN'T HE?
WHAT SHOULD I DO? WHEN I THINK HE'S COUNTING ON ME, I FEEL PRESSURED AND...
FINGERMARKS

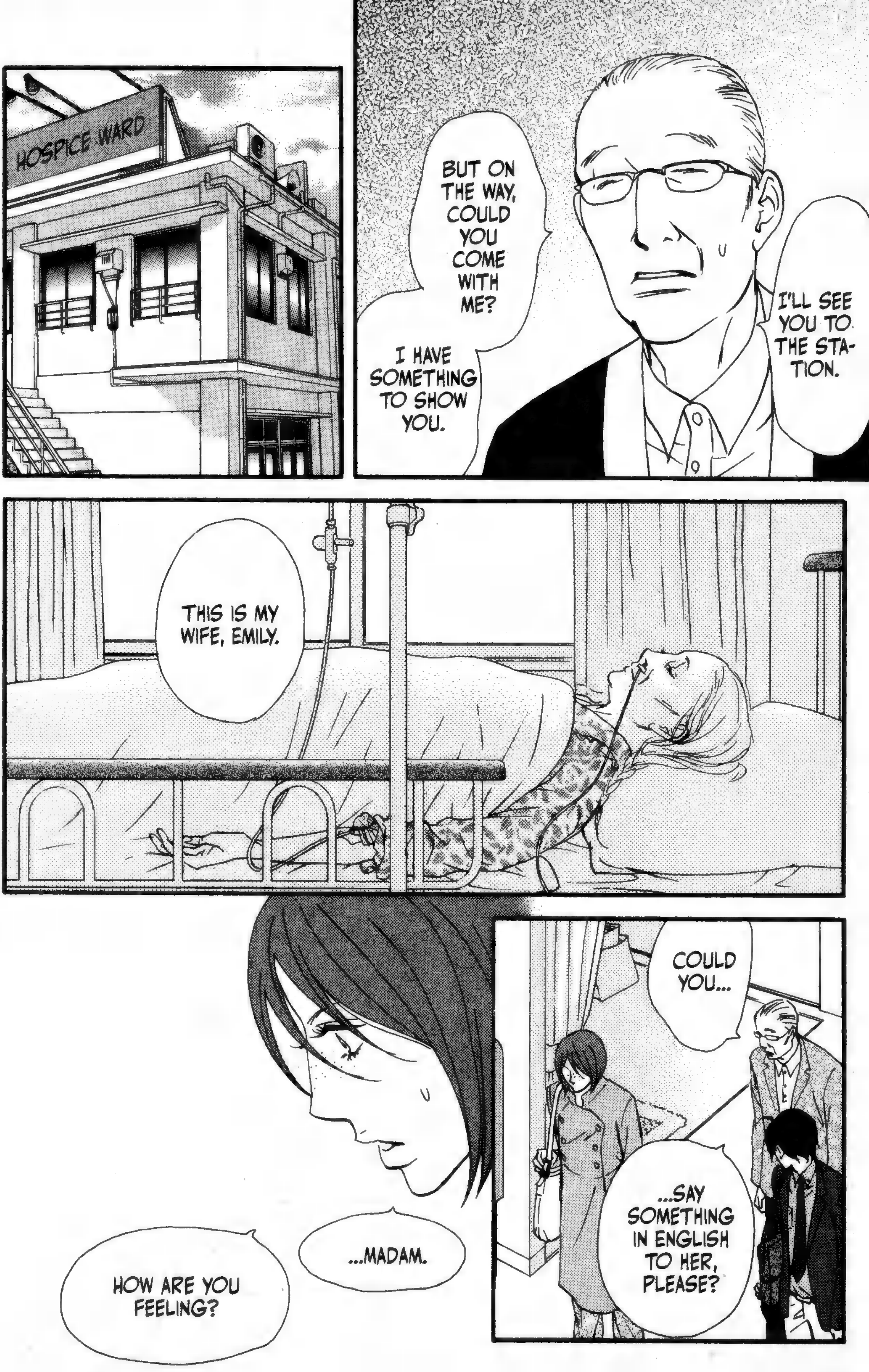

WELL, TAKE IT EASY.
AFTER ALL, YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO QUIT IN THE MIDDLE.
HMM? WHAT'S WRONG?
OH, NOTHING.
HOW IS YOUR HEALTH?
FINE, FINE. I'M EATING WELL NOWADAYS AND...
...CUTTING DOWN ON THE ALCO-HOL, YOU KNOW.
BECAUSE FUKU-SHIMA-SAN COOKS...
BECAUSE FUKUSHIMA-SAN MAKES HIM STOP.
I'LL COME TO TOKYO AGAIN SOON.
WE HAVE A LOT OF PLANNING TO DO, YOU KNOW.
THAT IS TRUE.

...
BEEP
I DIDN'T PLAN ON...
...QUITTING IN THE MIDDLE, YOU KNOW.
I'M EDMOND SUKENARI.
PLEASE CALL ME EDDIE.
NICE TO MEET YOU, SUKENARI.
UH... EDDIE.
YOUR DESK'S OVER HERE, SUKENARI.
THANK YOU... IT'S EDDIE.



TH-THEN, I KNOW IT'S ALL OF A SUDDEN, BUT PLEASE GO WITH EMMA AND COVER THE "VISIT TO A CRAFTSMAN" STORY.
IT'S A LACQUER ARTIST, MR. HIRANO, TODAY.
I... UNDERSTAND.
THEY SENT US A REALLY DEPRESSING ONE, DIDN'T THEY?
HUNCHED LIKE AN OLD MAN!
SHH, HE'LL HEAR YOU.
LOUD AND CLEAR.
WHAT ARE YOU LINING UP THERE?
THEY'RE COLLECTIBLE ACTION FIGURES.
PLEASE DON'T TOUCH THEM, EVEN WHEN I'M NOT HERE.
コト...
Hot Lady
THAT'S THE RARE FIGURE, "BLONDE HOT LADY"!!
DID YOU BUY IT AT AN AUCTION?!
MWA HA HA! I WOULDN'T STOOP THAT LOW.
UGH.
ムッ
WHO WOULD BOTHER TOUCHING SOMETHING LIKE--!
OH MY GOD!

ALL OF THE SUDDEN, THEIR CONVERSATION TAKES OFF.

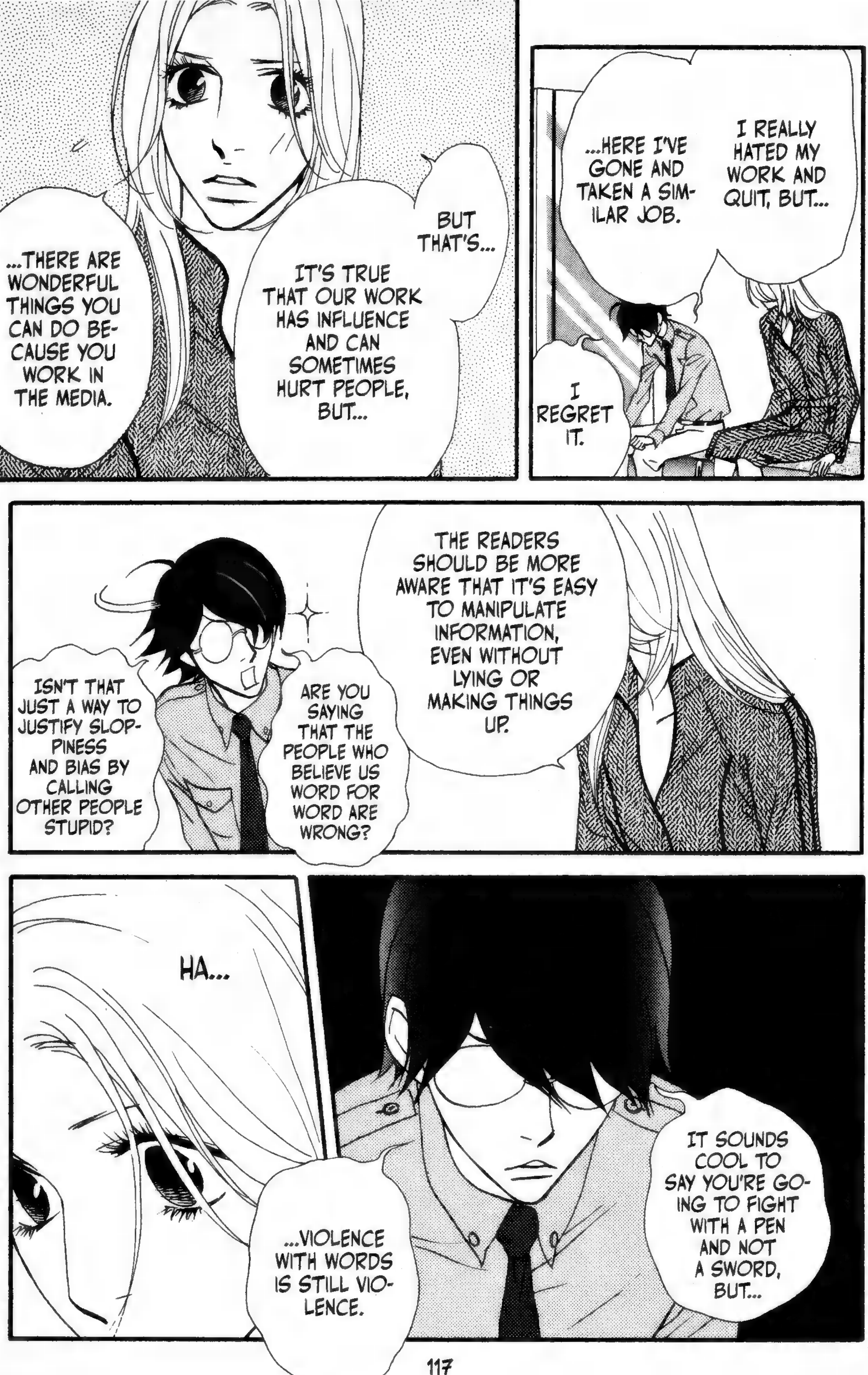

I'LL SEE YOU TO THE STATION.
BUT ON THE WAY, COULD YOU COME WITH ME?
I HAVE SOMETHING TO SHOW YOU.
HOSPICE WARD
THIS IS MY WIFE, EMILY.
COULD YOU...
...SAY SOMETHING IN ENGLISH TO HER, PLEASE?
...MADAM.
HOW ARE YOU FEELING?

EMILY!
ピクッ
HE SAID HIS WIFE HAS TERMINAL CANCER AND ISN'T EXPECTED TO WAKE FROM HER COMA EVER AGAIN.
SHE REACTS A LITTLE TO ENGLISH, SO I PROMISED THAT I'D GO AND READ THE ARTICLE OUT LOUD TO HER AFTER IT'S DONE.
POOR THING.
IT LOOKS LIKE HI-RANO-SAN USED TO BE JUST AN AVERAGE GUY, AND...
...EVEN THOUGH HIS WIFE IS AMERICAN, HE CAN'T SPEAK MUCH ENGLISH.

AND, LIKE, SUKENARI WAS CRYING ALL THE WAY BACK ON THE TRAIN!
HIS WAILING STARTED OFF THAT BUZZING IN MY EARS AGAIN.
SNIFFLE
I'M NOT WHAL-WING!
IT'S JUST THAT I EMPATHIZED WITH HIM.
IT'S BECAUSE MY MOM WAS AMERICAN AND DIED YOUNG.
BLOOOOOW
BUT IT'S A GOOD STORY. IT STICKS IN YOUR HEAD, SO LET'S PUT IT IN THE ARTICLE.
YEAH, I WAS THINK-ING THAT.
SLAM
IT'S NOT A "GOOD STORY"!
IT MAY BE GOOD FOR THE ARTICLE, BUT--
IT'S A MISERABLE STORY FOR THE HIRANOS!

WAIT A MINUTE!!
SUKENARI-SAN!
SUKENARI-SAN.
I'M SORRY. I DIDN'T THINK ABOUT YOUR MOTHER; THAT WAS THOUGHTLESS OF ME.
THAT'S NOT IT.
MY MOTHER DOESN'T HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH THIS.
IWAYA-SAN... COULD I TELL YOU SOME-THING THAT'S BEEN BOTHER-ING ME?

I'M NOT GIVING YOU ANY RARE ACTION FIGURES, THOUGH.
HMPH
I'M NOT TRYING TO GET ANY.
I'M GOING TO THE PRESS CLUB!
UNTIL HALF A YEAR AGO, I WAS IN THE POLITICS DEPARTMENT OF A CERTAIN NEWSPAPER COMPANY..
I'M GOING TO THE PRESS CLUB!
I WAS THE REPORTER ASSIGNED TO A CERTAIN POLITICIAN.
BUT THAT POLITICIAN FELL OUT OF FAVOR WITH THE LEADING PARTY, AND BECAME A TARGET OF A SMEAR CAMPAIGN.
I CHATTED WITH HIM OFF THE RECORD, AND THEN WROTE ARTICLES FILLED WITH MALICE.
I FOUND TRIVIAL FAULTS WITH HIM THAT HAD NOTHING AT ALL TO DO WITH HIS IDEOLOGIES AS A POLITICIAN AND...
...DIDN'T WRITE THINGS THAT DIDN'T FIT WITH OUR IMAGE OF HIM, THINGS LIKE THAT.
OF COURSE, INTERVIEWS WERE ALWAYS EXTREMELY AWKWARD.
MY DELICATE HEART COULDN'T TAKE IT.

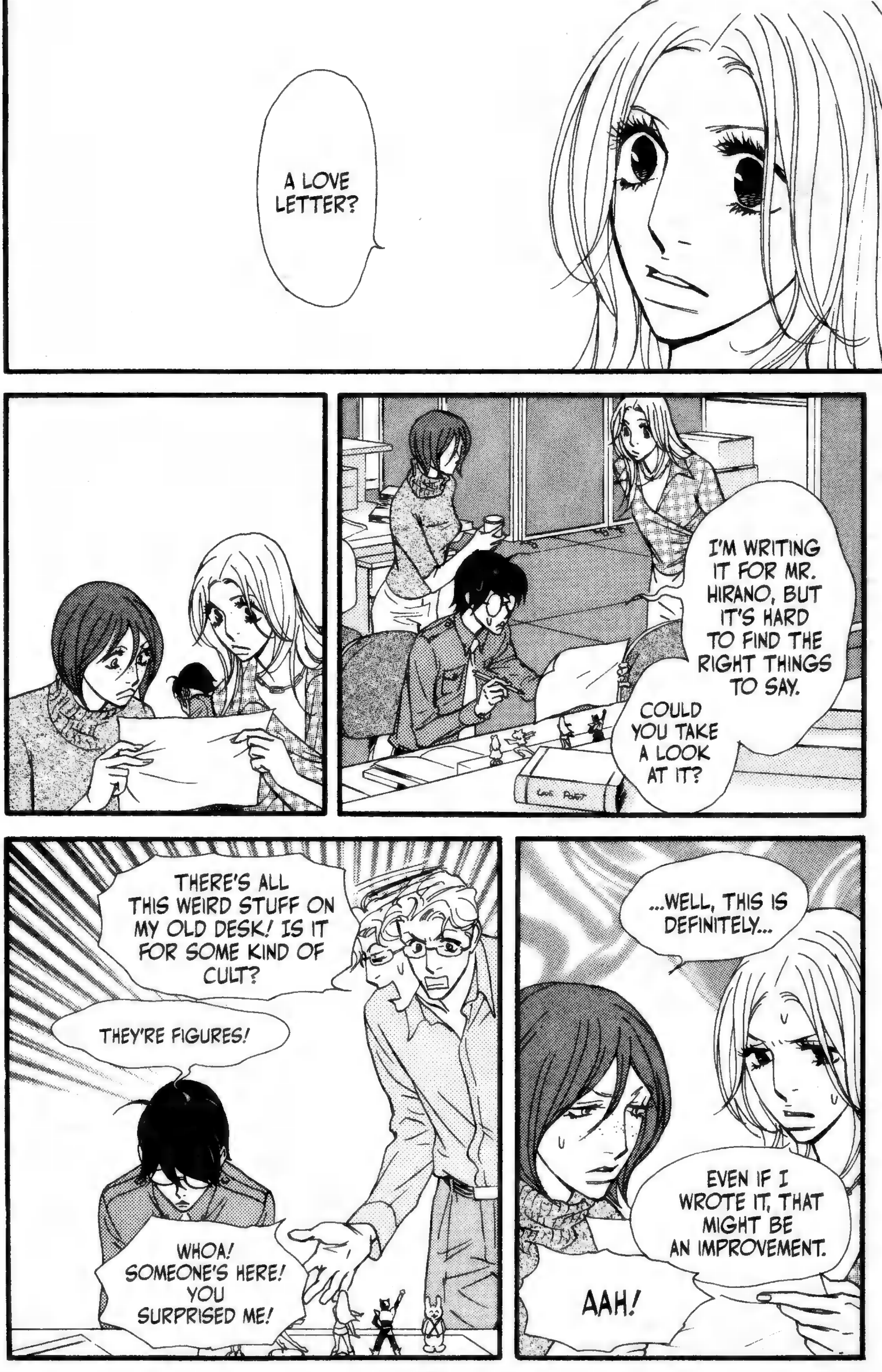

I REALLY HATED MY WORK AND QUIT, BUT...
...HERE I'VE GONE AND TAKEN A SIM-ILAR JOB.
I REGRET IT.
BUT THAT'S...
IT'S TRUE THAT OUR WORK HAS INFLUENCE AND CAN SOMETIMES HURT PEOPLE, BUT...
...THERE ARE WONDERFUL THINGS YOU CAN DO BE-CAUSE YOU WORK IN THE MEDIA.
THE READERS SHOULD BE MORE AWARE THAT IT'S EASY TO MANIPULATE INFORMATION, EVEN WITHOUT LYING OR MAKING THINGS UP.
ARE YOU SAYING THAT THE PEOPLE WHO BELIEVE US WORD FOR WORD ARE WRONG?
ISN'T THAT JUST A WAY TO JUSTIFY SLOP-PINESS AND BIAS BY CALLING OTHER PEOPLE STUPID?
IT SOUNDS COOL TO SAY YOU'RE GO-ING TO FIGHT WITH A PEN AND NOT A SWORD, BUT...
...VIOLENCE WITH WORDS IS STILL VIO-LENCE.
HA...

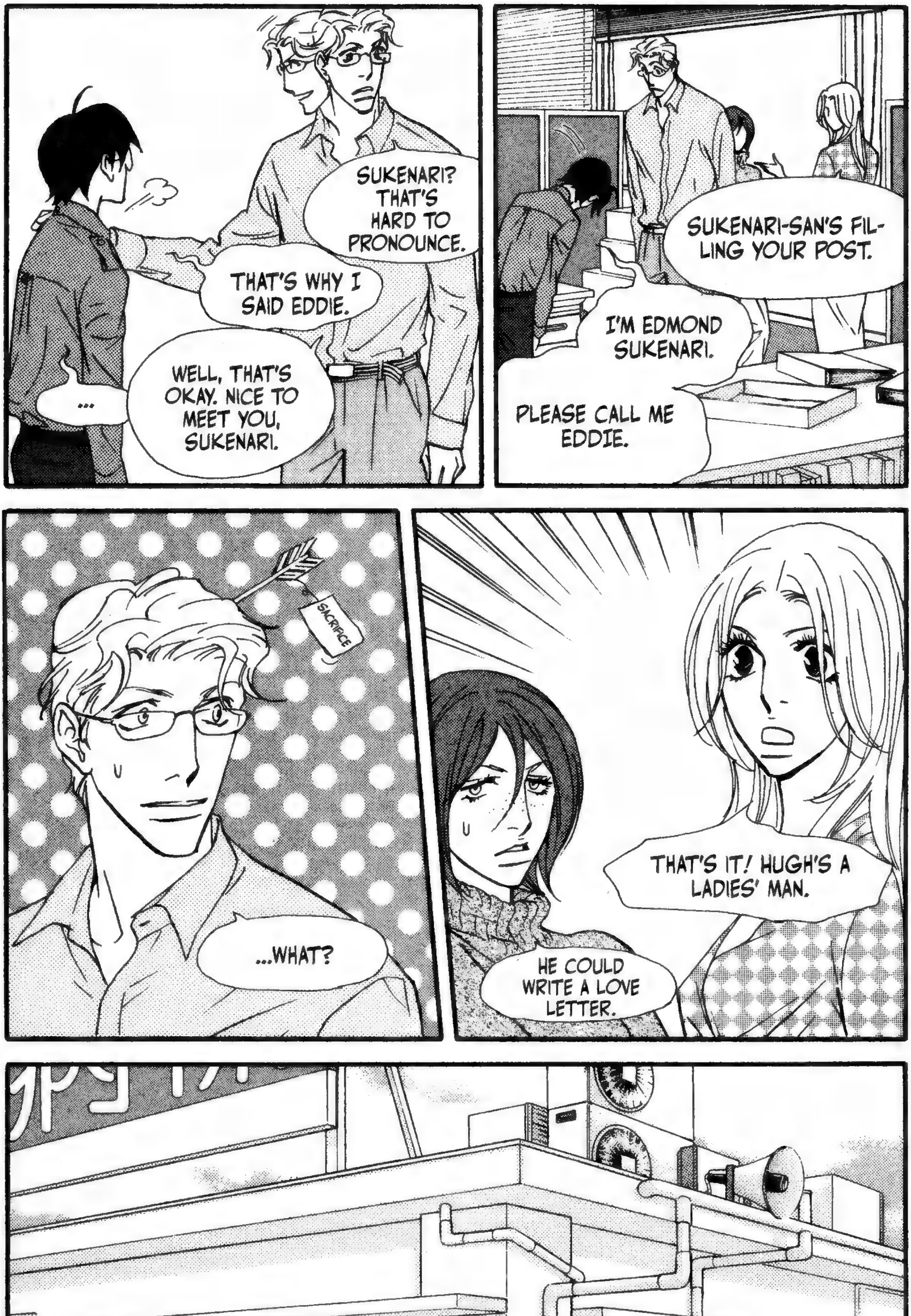
COME TO THINK OF IT, LAST YEAR...
WHAT IS THIS?
OH, THAT? IT'S GOT AN INTERVIEW WITH ME IN IT.
SNORT
WHAT'S WITH THE VANITY?
HA HA HA.
DID YOU REALLY SAY THIS STUFF?
I DIDN'T SAY THAT STUFF.
MOST OF IT'S FICTION.
I COULDN'T HELP IT. I'M NOT USED TO PUBLIC SPEAK-ING, YOU KNOW?
I COULDN'T SAY WHAT THEY WANTED ME TO SAY.
BUT YOU KNOW, BEING MISREPRESENTED LIKE THAT...
...HURTS JUST A BIT.
VIOLENCE WITH WORDS IS STILL VIOLENCE.

BECAUSE I KNEW I WOULD BE LEAV-ING THE NEWSPAPER SOON.
IT MAY HAVE BEEN BECAUSE I FELT GUILTY.
IT WASN'T JUST BECAUSE I DIDN'T HAVE MUCH EXPERI-ENCE.
IN THE END, I COULDN'T SAY ANYTHING TO CHEER HIM UP.
BUT ONE WEEK LATER...
IS THIS ALL OF THEM?
IF YOU COUNT THE EMAILS, WE'VE HAD ABOUT THIRTY LETTERS IN TWO DAYS.
WHAT ARE THEY?
THEY'RE GET-WELL CARDS IN ENGLISH, FROM THE READERS TO HIRANO-SAN'S WIFE.
THEY WANT US TO READ THEM TO HER.
REALLY?

EVERYONE SEES A BIT OF THEIR OWN SITUATION IN THEIRS, AND IT HITS HOME.
I THOUGHT WE'D GET A RESPONSE, BUT THIS IS MORE THAN I'D IMAGINED.
WE TOOK TURNS GOING TO READ HER THE LET-TERS.
WE PUSHED FOR EMMA'S FOLLOW-UP RE-PORT, AND THE LETTERS OF ENCOURAGEMENT CONTINUED TO COME IN.
YOU'RE VERY KIND TO VISIT ALL THE TIME.
IT'S NO TROU-BLE AT ALL.
LATELY, SHE'S BEGUN TO SMILE, EVER SO FAINTLY...
...BUT HER BODY CAN NO LONGER HOLD ON.

I WISH...
...THAT SHE COULD HAVE UNDERSTOOD MY WORDS IN THE END.
LET'S DO IT, HIRANO-SAN!
LET'S TELL YOUR WIFE HOW YOU FEEL!
WHAT?
YOU CAN WRITE A LETTER.
WE'LL TRANSLATE IT INTO ENG-LISH AND ADD THE PHONETIC PRONUNCIA-TION.
B-BUT I'M NOT...
...GOOD AT LETTERS AND THINGS.


A LOVE LETTER?
I'M WRITING IT FOR MR. HIRANO, BUT IT'S HARD TO FIND THE RIGHT THINGS TO SAY.
COULD YOU TAKE A LOOK AT IT?
...WELL, THIS IS DEFINITELY...
EVEN IF I WROTE IT, THAT MIGHT BE AN IMPROVEMENT.
AAH!
THERE'S ALL THIS WEIRD STUFF ON MY OLD DESK! IS IT FOR SOME KIND OF CULT?
THEY'RE FIGURES!
WHOA! SOMEONE'S HERE! YOU SURPRISED ME!


SUKENARI? THAT'S HARD TO PRONOUNCE.
THAT'S WHY I SAID EDDIE.
WELL, THAT'S OKAY. NICE TO MEET YOU, SUKENARI.
...
SUKENARI-SAN'S FIL-LING YOUR POST.
I'M EDMOND SUKENARI.
PLEASE CALL ME EDDIE.
SACRIFICE
...WHAT?
THAT'S IT! HUGH'S A LADIES' MAN.
HE COULD WRITE A LOVE LETTER.

IT'LL BE FINE, HIRA-NO-SAN.
IT WAS PERFECT WHEN YOU PRACTICED IT!
Y-YEAH...
EMILY.
KAN U HEYAR ME?
HER EYES...
SHH!
THANK YOU FOR COMING FROM SO FAR AWAY TO MARRY ME.
I KNOW HOW MUCH YOU HAD TO GIVE UP, ESPE-CIALLY NOW, WHEN I CAN'T EVEN GIVE YOU A WORD OF CONSOLATION IN ENGLISH.

BUT IN THE PAST THIRTY-FIVE YEARS, YOU'VE MADE ME HAPPIER THAN I EVER THOUGHT WAS POSSIBLE...
COME ON, HIRANO-SAN!
YOU MAY BE LONELY FOR A WHILE OVER ON THE OTHER SIDE, BUT DON'T WORRY.
I WILL COME TO EMBRACE YOU AS SOON AS I CAN.

FROM THEN ON, WE'LL BE TOGETHER FOREVER.
I LOVE YOU...EMILY...

IWAYA-SAN, I...
SNIFF
...WANT TO TELL OUR READERS ABOUT THIS.
I REMEMBER NOW...
...WHY I WANTED TO WRITE IN THE FIRST PLACE!
IT'S IRONIC, BUT...
...MY HEART WAS HURT BY THE SAME THING THAT MADE HIM SO HAPPY.

...I DON'T WANT TO QUIT WORK.
AND I THINK IT'S BE-CAUSE...
MEN'S
WELL, IF I DO SAY SO MYSELF, I'M AFRAID OF MY OWN GENIUS!
IF YOU EVER NEED TO SEDUCE SOME GIRL, I'LL HELP YOU.
EH? SUKENA--
SIGH...
I WONDER WHY NO ONE WILL CALL ME EDDIE?
HAVE YOU EVER CONSIDERED CON-TACT LENSES?

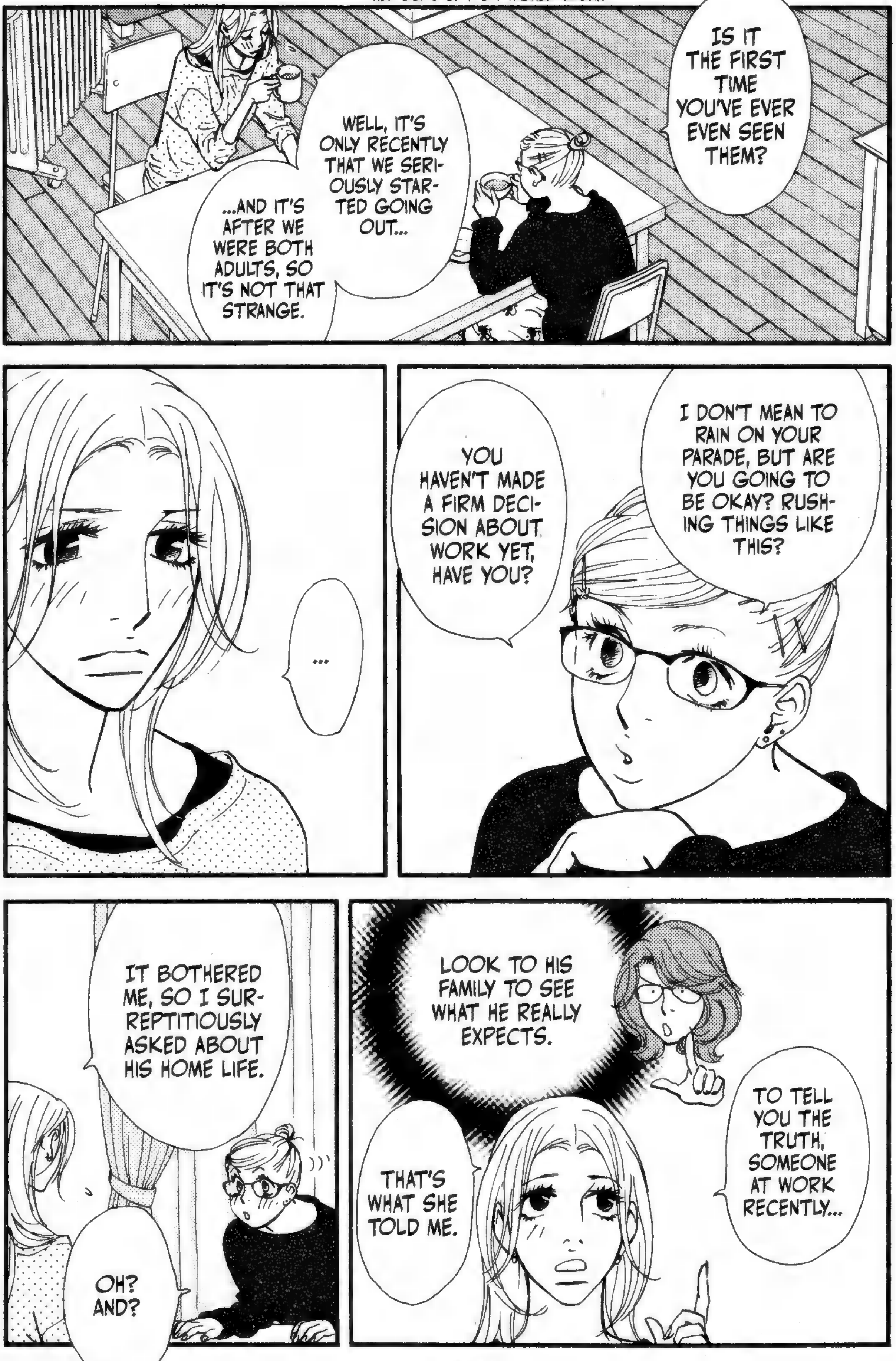
RULE 57:
SOME KIND OF "EN"

SUMIRE
SUMIRE HASUMI
IWAYA-SAN.
W-W-WHAT?!!
PANIC
THERE WAS GREEK IN THAT READING ASSIGNMENT THE PROFESSOR GAVE US YESTERDAY, RIGHT? I WAS WONDERING IF YOU COULD SHOW ME YOUR NOTES.
OH, YES, HERE YOU GO.
WHOA, I SLEPT THROUGH A LOT OF THIS CLASS.
I DON'T REMEMBER THIS AT ALL.

IT WAS A DREAM...
...WITHIN A DREAM.
TEN YEARS LATER
YOUR SKIRT'S A LITTLE SHORT.
YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO SIT ON A TATAMI MAT IF THE ROOM IS TRADITIONAL-STYLE.
AND WHAT'S WITH THIS FABRIC?
SILK'S NO GOOD. THEY'LL THINK YOU WON'T HELP IN THE KITCHEN.
TSK! NEWBIE.

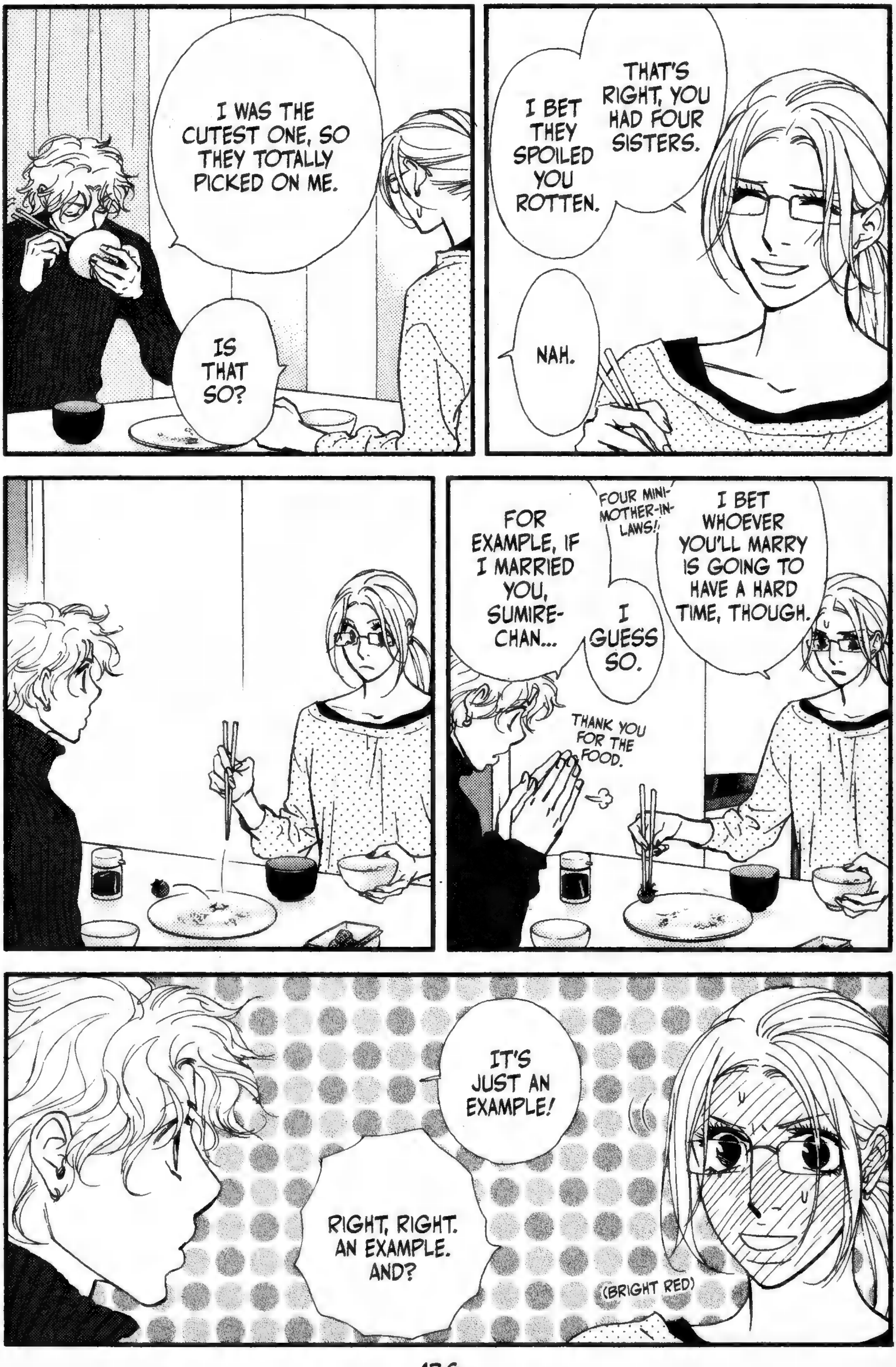
I CAN DO IT!
IT'S NOT LIKE YOU'RE GOING TO DO HOUSE-WORK TODAY!
TODAI SWEAT SUIT
I CAN TAKE YOU ON!..
TOO TOUGH-LOOKING.
I'M SO UNWOR-THY! ♡
YOU CAN'T WIN THEM OVER BY JUST ACTING CUTE.
COACH, I CAN'T TAKE ANY MORE!
REALLY!
...WAIT, WHY DO YOU HAVE CLOTHES LIKE THAT?
GOTHIC LOLITA
SO YOU'RE FINALLY GOING TO MEET HASUMI-SAN'S PARENTS.

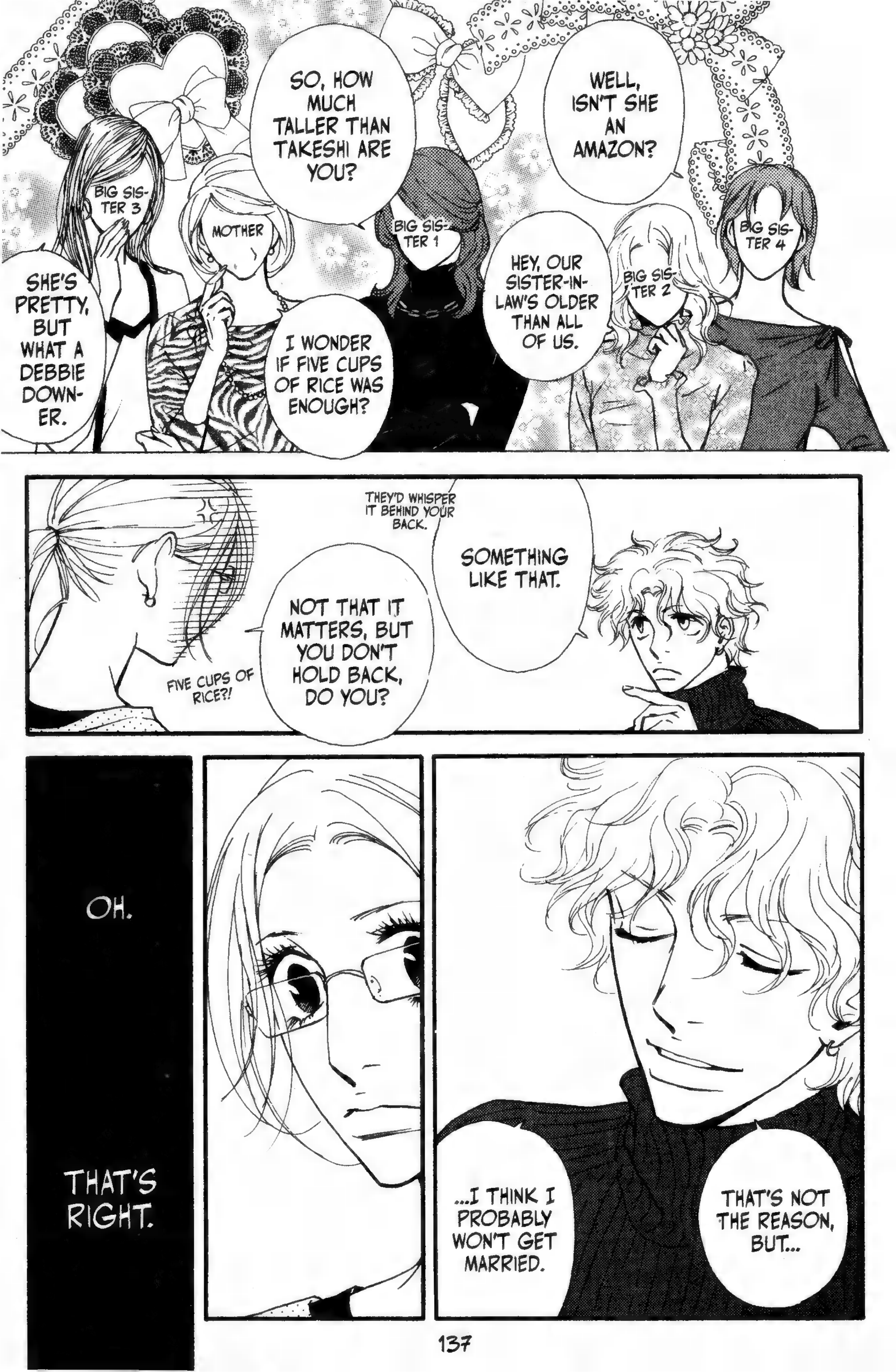
HER BUN'S UP A BIT HIGHER TODAY.



MY MOM?
HMM...I THINK SHE'S JUST A NORMAL MOM.
SHE REALLY CARES ABOUT OUR HEALTH, SO SHE MAKES EVERYTHING HERSELF!
THINGS LIKE MISO AND KETCHUP, YOU KNOW.
WHAT? HOW DO YOU EVEN MAKE MISO?
YOU TAKE SOYBEANS AND...I REALLY DON'T KNOW.
I THINK SHE'S THE TYPE THAT'S REALLY SERIOUS ABOUT HOUSEWORK.
SHE USED TO SPREAD USED TEA LEAVES OVER THE TATAMI AND SWEEP IT WITH A BROOM.
USED TEA?
USED TEA.
NOW-ADAYS?
COME TO THINK OF IT, SHE SEWED ALL MY CLOTHES UNTIL I WAS IN MIDDLE SCHOOL AND HAD A UNIFORM.
EVEN NOW, SHE SEWS ME A YUKATA EVERY YEAR. ALTHOUGH I NEVER WEAR THEM.
...
...
IS HASUMI-SAN'S FAMILY POOR?
I MEAN, HAND-SEWING CLOTHES?!
NO. I THINK HIS DAD'S HIGH UP IN A FORTUNE 500 COMPANY.

SO CAN YOU SWEEP UP USED TEA LEAVES, MAKE YOUR OWN MISO AND SEW YUKATAS WHILE WORKING?
MAYBE IF I TRY...IT SOUNDS DOABLE...
...MAYBE NOT.
WHENEVER I HEAR CONVERSATIONS LIKE THIS...
...I THINK THAT WOMEN SURE HAVE IT HARD.
I BET SHE MAKES HER OWN PICKLES, TOO!
I HAD A CARTON OF YOGURT LAST FOR A YEAR IN THE BACK OF MY FRIDGE ONCE...
GROW STRONG, LITTLE ONE.
?
SAY, MOMO, YOUR MOM'S A BALLET TEACHER, RIGHT?
HOW DID SHE HANDLE THE HOUSEWORK?
HMM.
WE HAD A MAID COME OVER, AND I HAD BIG SISTERS, TOO.


THAT'S RIGHT, YOU HAD FOUR SISTERS.
I BET THEY SPOILED YOU ROTTEN.
NAH.
I WAS THE CUTEST ONE, SO THEY TOTALLY PICKED ON ME.
IS THAT SO?
I BET WHOEVER YOU'LL MARRY IS GOING TO HAVE A HARD TIME, THOUGH.
FOUR MINI-MOTHER-IN-LAWS!
I GUESS SO.
FOR EXAMPLE, IF I MARRIED YOU, SUMIRE-CHAN...
THANK YOU FOR THE FOOD.
IT'S JUST AN EXAMPLE!
(BRIGHT RED)
RIGHT, RIGHT. AN EXAMPLE. AND?


BIG SIS-TER 4
BIG SIS-TER 2
BIG SIS-TER 1
MOTHER
BIG SIS-TER 3
WELL, ISN'T SHE AN AMAZON?
SO, HOW MUCH TALLER THAN TAKESHI ARE YOU?
HEY, OUR SISTER-IN-LAW'S OLDER THAN ALL OF US.
I WONDER IF FIVE CUPS OF RICE WAS ENOUGH?
SHE'S PRETTY, BUT WHAT A DEBBIE DOWN-ER.
SOMETHING LIKE THAT.
THEY'D WHISPER IT BEHIND YOUR BACK.
NOT THAT IT MATTERS, BUT YOU DON'T HOLD BACK, DO YOU?
FIVE CUPS OF RICE?!
THAT'S NOT THE REASON, BUT...
...I THINK I PROBABLY WON'T GET MARRIED.
OH.
THAT'S RIGHT.

AFTER ALL...
...MOMO HAS HIS OWN LIFE.
MY OLDEST SISTER'S HUSBAND TOOK OUR FAMILY NAME AND IS PROBABLY GOING TO TAKE OVER DAD'S COMPANY.
OH, BUT I DO WANT KIDS.
I JUST HAVE TO FIND SOMEONE TO HAVE THEM FOR ME.
HIS DAYS HERE ARE ONLY A PART OF THAT.
THAT'S NORMAL, BUT....
FOR NAMES, I LIKE MAMI, MIO, AKEMI...
...IF WE'RE JUST GOING TO PART, THEN WHY DID WE MEET?
THE BUDDHIST VIEW
HEY, IWAYA.
DO YOU KNOW WHY THE KANJI "EN" HAS SO MANY MEANINGS?

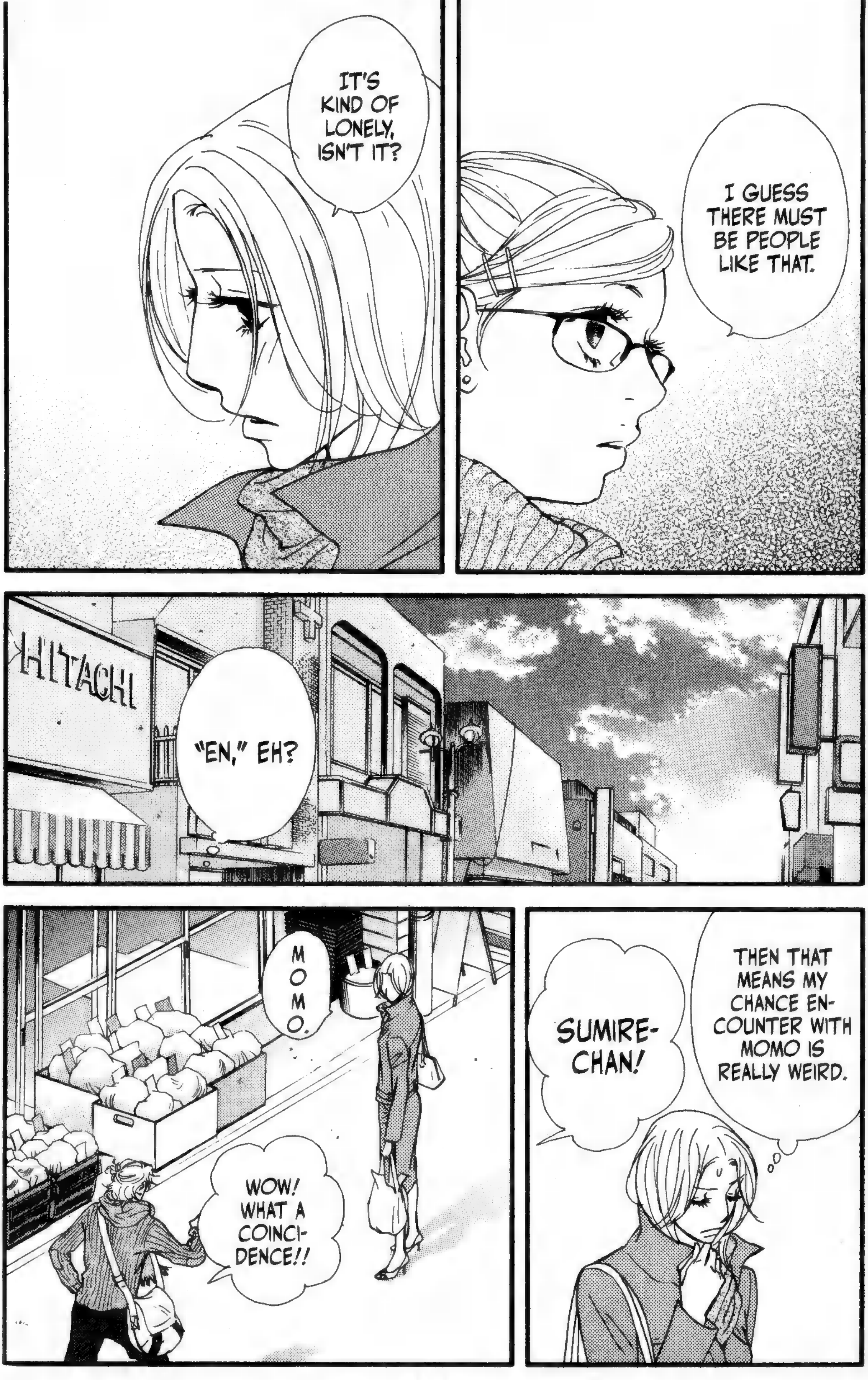
YEAH, AND THE MEANINGS ARE A BIT DIFFERENT FOR EACH OF THEM, RIGHT?
"EN"? HMM.
I THINK IT'S ALSO READ "ENISHI" OR "YUKARI" OR "YOSUGA."
WHEN I TOLD PROFESSOR MATSUI FROM MY JAPANESE CLASS THAT WE SHOULD STUDY THE CHARACTER "EN"...
...HE SAID THAT WOULD TAKE TIME, SO WE SHOULD WAIT FOR NEXT TIME.
IT'S TRUE THERE ISN'T A WORD IN ENGLISH THAT FITS IT PERFECTLY, BUT...
OH.
WOW! "THE BUDDHIST VIEW." THAT'S A DIFFICULT BOOK.
TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH, I CAN'T UNDERSTAND HALF OF IT.
WHEN I LOOKED IT UP, I SAW THAT IT USED TO BE BUDDHIST JARGON.
"A THING CAN ONLY COME INTO BEING WHEN THE IMMEDIATE CAUSE, 'IN,' AND THE INDIRECT CAUSE, 'EN,' ARE ASSOCIATED WITH EACH OTHER."

HE'S HERE AGAIN
SO EVEN IF YOU TRY SPEED DATING, WHICH IS "IN," IF YOU DON'T HAVE "EN," THEN YOU WON'T FIND A LOVER.
NO MATTER HOW OFTEN YOU GO TO A FIGURINE SHOP, IF YOU DON'T HAVE AN "EN" THEN YOU WON'T GET A RARE FIGURE, RIGHT?
WELL...I GUESS SO.
WELL, OF COURSE THERE'S NO ENG-LISH FOR IT.
CHRISTIANITY DOESN'T LEND ITSELF TO A CONCEPT THIS CONFUSING AND ABSTRACT!
CONFUSING AND ABSTRACT?
I SEE IT DIFFERENTLY.

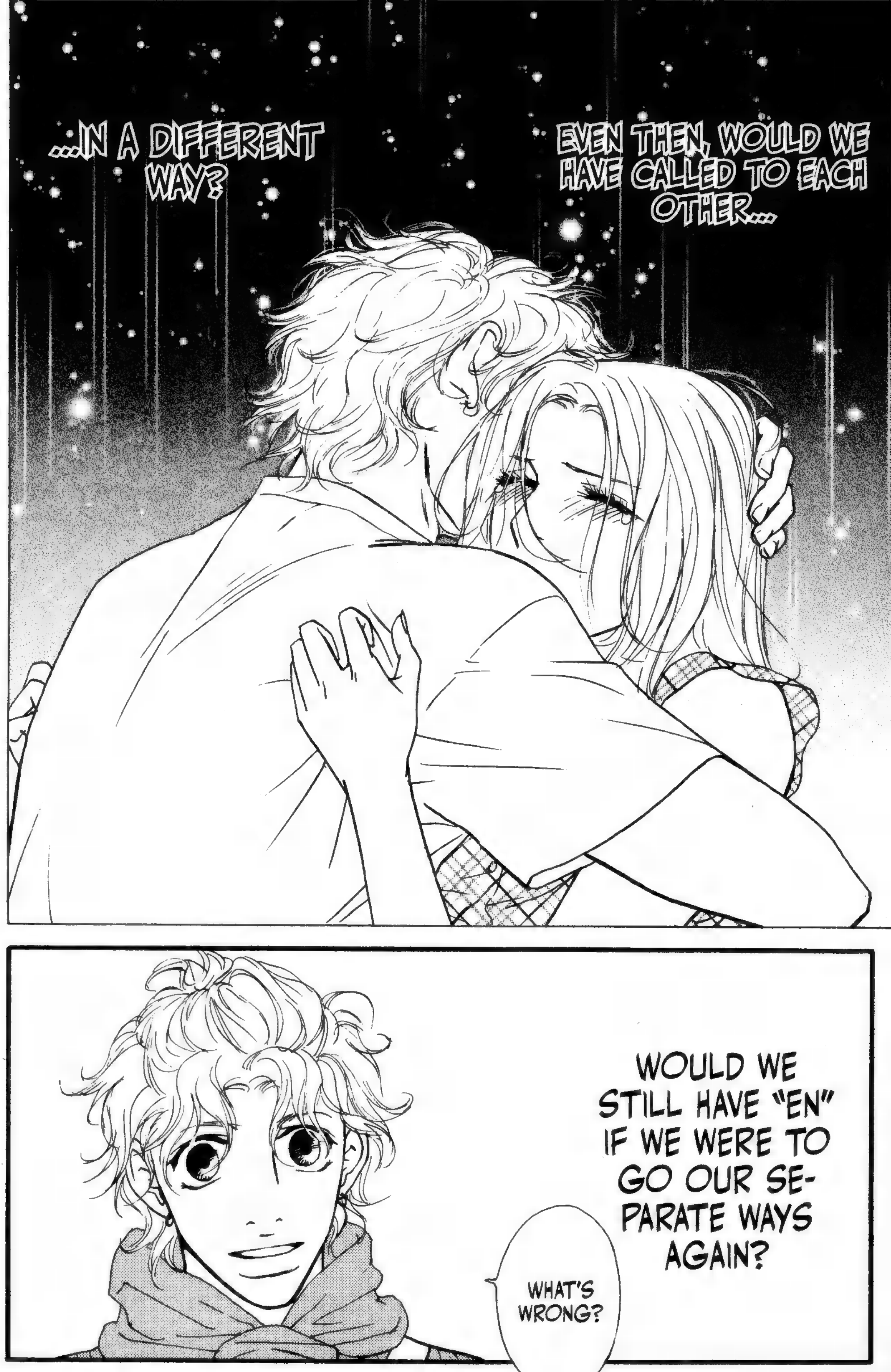
SHE HAS TWO BUNS TODAY. ♡

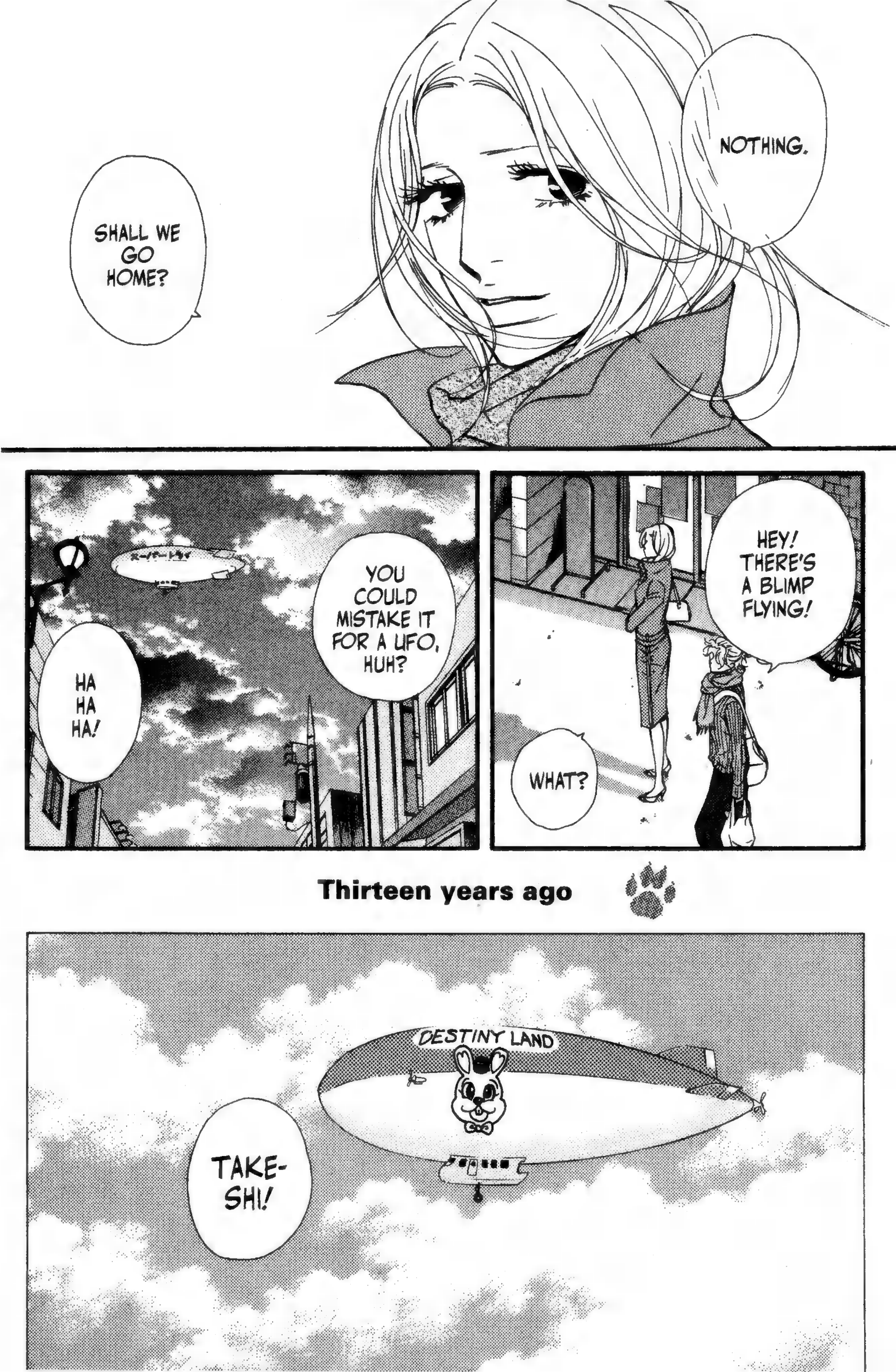
I WAS SUPPOSED TO GO TO AMER-ICA BEFORE I EVEN STARTED GRADE SCHOOL BECAUSE OF MY DAD'S TRANSFER, YOU KNOW.
SO THERE'S A GOOD CHANCE THAT I WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN IN THE SAME CLASS AS YOU.
WHAT? YOU'RE KID-DING!
BUT YOU KNOW, EVEN IF THAT HAPPENED, I THINK WE WOULD HAVE MET SOME-WHERE, SOME-PLACE.
AND WE WOULD HAVE BEEN FRIENDS. THAT'S HOW I FEEL.
MAYBE WHILE YOU WERE AN EXCHANGE STUDENT IN AMERICA.
ARE YOU JAPANESE, TOO?
YES. I'M AN EX-CHANGE STUDENT.
EVEN WITH HASUMI-SAN, YOU MIGHT HAVE MET AT THE NEWSPAPER OFFICE, EVEN IF YOU'D GONE TO DIFFERENT UNI-VERSITIES.
管理部
WHAT A HOTTIE!
THAT SURE LOOKS HEAVY.

WE HAVE "EN" AND...
...WHEN THE TIME WAS RIGHT, WE CALLED OUT TO EACH OTHER.
SOMETHING LIKE THAT.
YURI-CHAN... LET'S BE FRIENDS FOREVER, OKAY?
じ〜ん
UH, I TOUCHED A BIT OF DOG DOO WITH THAT HAND.
IT GOES THE OTHER WAY, TOO. SOME PEOPLE ARE CLOSE BY, BUT BECAUSE OF BAD TIMING OR CIR-CUMSTANCES, YOU NEVER MEET THEM.
THERE ARE PEOPLE LIKE THAT WHO YOU JUST NEVER MEET.
YEP. IT'S STRANGE.
BECAUSE THERE'S NO "EN"...
...NO MATTER HOW MANY CHANCES THERE MIGHT BE, YOU'LL NEVER BE TOGETHER.


I GUESS THERE MUST BE PEOPLE LIKE THAT.
IT'S KIND OF LONELY, ISN'T IT?
"EN," EH?
THEN THAT MEANS MY CHANCE EN-COUNTER WITH MOMO IS REALLY WEIRD.
SUMIRE-CHAN!
MOMO.
WOW! WHAT A COINCI-DENCE!!
HITACHI

YOU KNOW, I WAS JUST THINKING OF YOU RIGHT NOW!
WE DON'T GET TO GO HOME TOGE-THER MUCH, DO WE?
I WAS THINKING OF YOU, TOO, MOMO.
I MIGHT HAVE MET HIM BEFORE.
AND IF I DID, THAT WASN'T THE END OF THE STORY. SO THAT MUST MEAN...
...THAT MY LONELY SOUL CALLED MOMO AND...
...HIS FEELINGS OF HOMELESS-NESS CALLED ME? IS THAT WHY WE MET??
I BETTER TOSS IT.
IF SOMEONE DIDN'T LEAVE THAT CARD-BOARD BOX THERE THAT DAY...
IF I'D JUST PASSED BY THE BOX...
WRES-TLING'S ABOUT TO START.


EVEN THEN, WOULD WE HAVE CALLED TO EACH OTHER...
...IN A DIFFERENT WAY?
WOULD WE STILL HAVE "EN" IF WE WERE TO GO OUR SE-PARATE WAYS AGAIN?
WHAT'S WRONG?


NOTHING.
SHALL WE GO HOME?
HEY! THERE'S A BLIMP FLYING!
WHAT?
YOU COULD MISTAKE IT FOR A UFO, HUH?
HA HA HA!
Thirteen years ago
DESTINY LAND
TAKE-SHI!

IF YOU DON'T HURRY UP, I'M GOING TO LEAVE YOU THERE!
YOU WANTED ICE CREAM, RIGHT?
THERE'S A UFO UP THERE!
WHAT?
WHOO!
WHOOSH! WHOOSH!

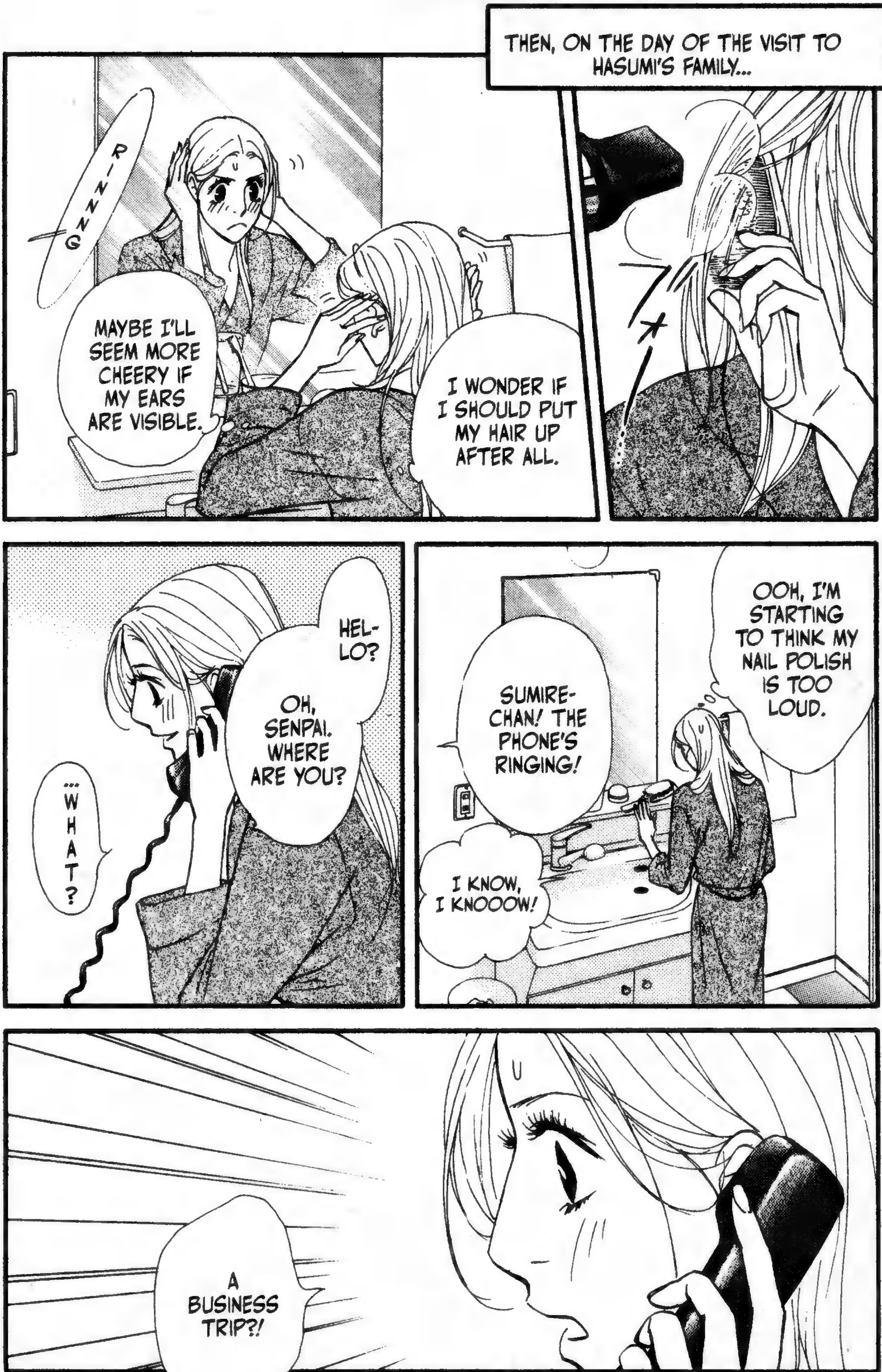
FWOOMP!
WHOOP, WHOOP, WHOO--
MMPH! WHAT IS THAT?
WEIRD.
THAT'S A UFO DANCE.
I JUST THOUGHT IT UP.
YOU WHAT?
OH, THAT'S A BLIMP!
MOM, LIS-TEN! YOU KNOW WHAT TAKESHI--
MAYBE HE'D HAVE BEEN BETTER SUITED FOR MODERN DANCE THAN BALLET.
HASUMI-KUN, THERE'S A SPOT RIGHT HERE!

IT'S NICE TO TAKE A BREAK EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE, ISN'T IT?
I'D GO CRAZY IF ALL I DID WAS CRAM FOR EXAMS!
I'M FINE, BUT...
...KEIKO-SAN, THEY WON'T WAIT FOR YOU TO PASS THE ENTRANCE EXAMS ANOTHER YEAR, WILL THEY?
OH! YOU SAY MEAN THINGS, MR. STILL-IN-HIGH-SCHOOL.
YOU SHOULDN'T PRESSURE SOMEONE WHO'S ALREADY FLUNKED THE EXAMS!
HEY, HASUMI-KUN, WHY DON'T YOU TRY FOR TOKYO UNIVERSITY, TOO?
IT'D BE LUCKY IF WE BOTH PASSED, RIGHT?
UHH...
WOW!
WHAT?
KEIKO-SAN, THAT THING!
IT'S A UFO! A UFO!

IS SOME-THING WRONG?
SOMEONE JUST SAID "UFO."
OH, THAT MUST BE IT UP THERE. THAT BLIMP.
OH, THAT'S ALL.
A BLIMP, HUH?
BLIMPS ARE BALLOONS BECAUSE THEY FLOAT WITH HELIUM.
WHEN YOU ADD POWER AND IT MOVES FORWARD, A BALLOON TURNS INTO A BLIMP.
THAT MAKES SENSE.
SUMIRE, YOU SURE KNOW A LOT.
MAYBE YOU SHOULD BE A REPORT-ER OR SOMETHING SOMEDAY.
YOU WANT A WRITING JOB, RIGHT?!
I HEAR THEY GET PAID WELL, TOO.
HMM...

A REPORTER, HUH?
REALLY! IT'S JUST A BLIMP!
OH, YOU'RE RIGHT.
SO, TOKYO UNIVERSITY! WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?
WHAT HAVE I GOT TO LOSE?
MAYBE I'LL TRY FOR IT.
HEY, BIG SIS?
WHAT'S "MODERN DANCE"?

BRUSHING UP AGAINST YOUR SLEEVE IS SOME KIND OF "EN," TOO.
DESTINY LAND
WHAT'S THAT? I DON'T UNDERSTAND.
THEN IT'LL JUST BE A BIG MYSTERY, OKAY?
IT JUST MEANS THAT IT MUST BE SOME KIND OF "EN" THAT YOU AND ME ARE TOGE-THER LIKE THIS.


THEN, ON THE DAY OF THE VISIT TO HASUMI'S FAMILY...
I WONDER IF I SHOULD PUT MY HAIR UP AFTER ALL.
MAYBE I'LL SEEM MORE CHEERY IF MY EARS ARE VISIBLE.
RINNNG
OOH, I'M STARTING TO THINK MY NAIL POLISH IS TOO LOUD.
SUMIRE-CHAN! THE PHONE'S RINGING!
I KNOW, I KNOOOW!
HEL-LO?
OH, SENPAI. WHERE ARE YOU?
...WHAT?
A BUSINESS TRIP?!

SORRY. I KNOW I'M ALWAYS CHANGING PLANS AT THE LAST MINUTE.
I ALREADY CALLED MY FAMILY IN YOKOHAMA.
THEY WERE REALLY DISAPPOINTED.
I HAVEN'T MET YOUR FAMILY YET EITHER.
IT SEEMS WE JUST DON'T HAVE ANY LUCK WITH THINGS LIKE THIS, EH?
"BECAUSE THERE'S NO 'EN'..."
"...NO MATTER HOW MANY CHANCES THERE MIGHT BE..."
WELL, AT ANY RATE, PLEASE BE CAREFUL.
YES... OKAY...

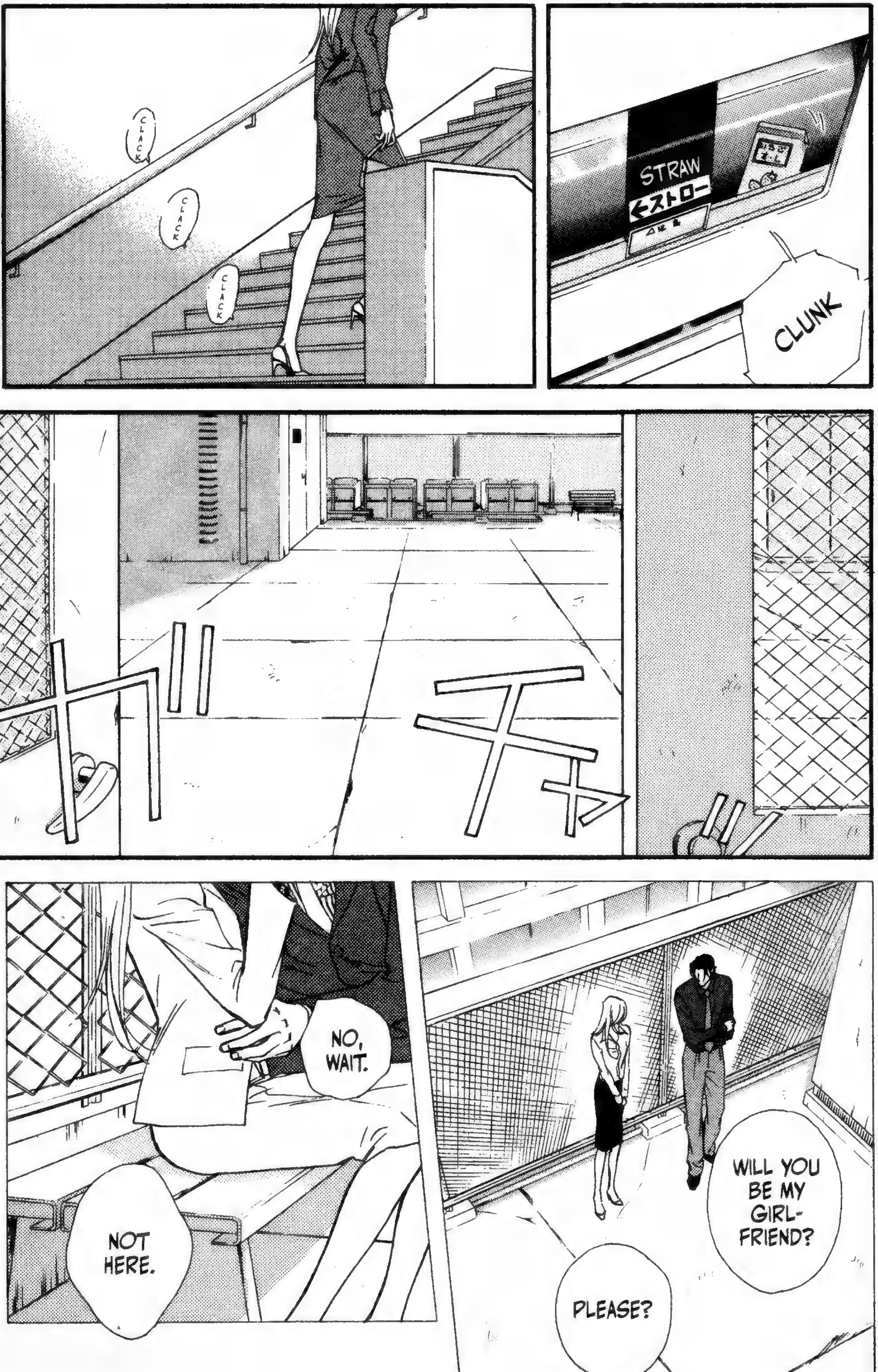
"...YOU'LL NEVER BE TOGETHER."
THAT'S NOT IT.
SUMIRE-CHAN?
"I GUESS THERE MUST BE PEOPLE LIKE THAT."
IT'S JUST A COINCI-DENCE.

RULE 58:
PRIORITIES

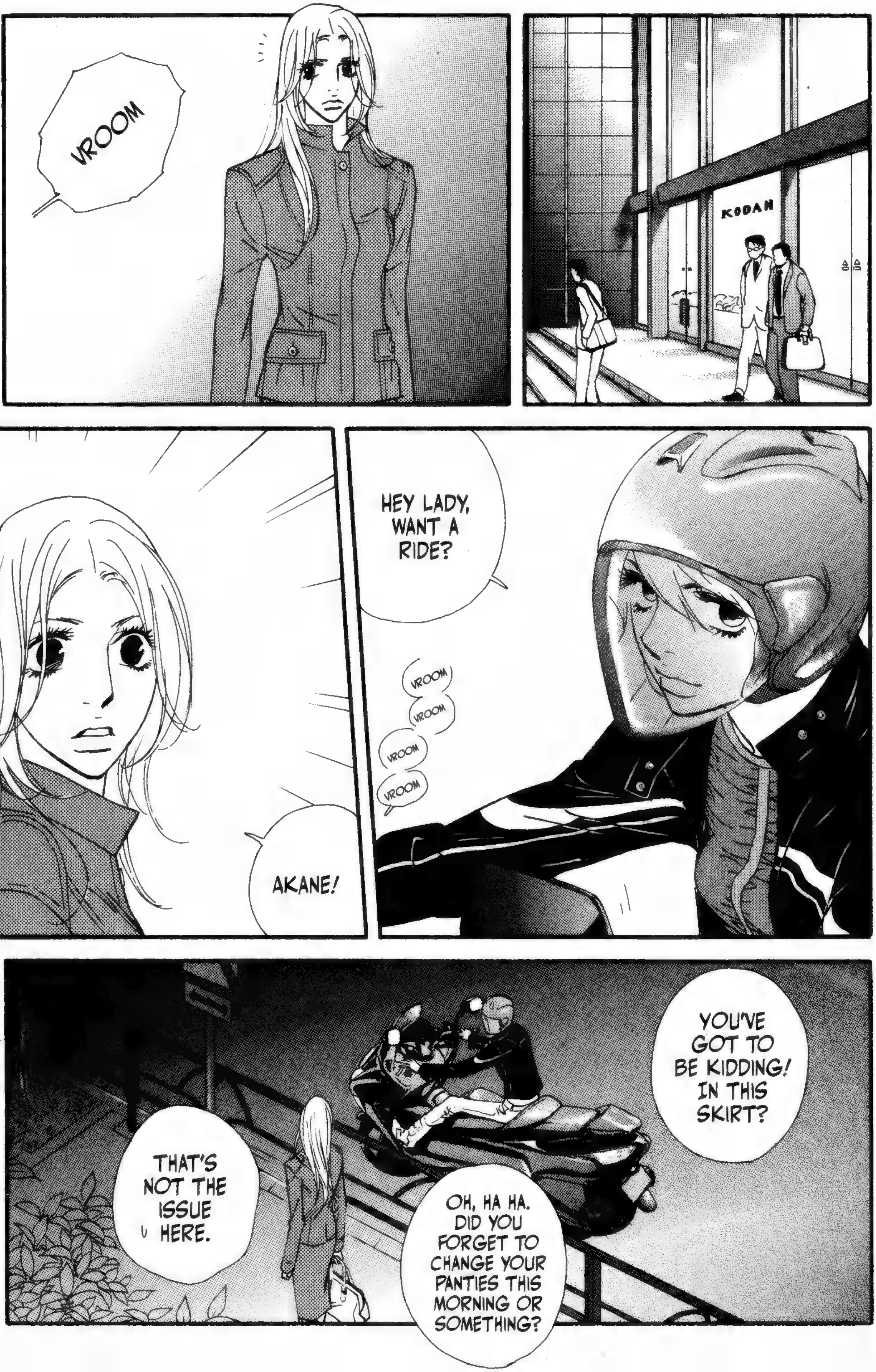
WHY ARE YOU MAD? I DON'T GET IT.
IT'S 'CUZ YOU'RE STUPID! DO YOU EVEN UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU'RE DOING?!
I THOUGHT I WAS DOING IT FOR YOUR SAKE AND--
HMPH!

INTERNATIONAL FEATURES?
WE'RE WAITING ON THE FOLLOW-UP REPORT ON THE AIR RAID. WE'LL UPDATE IT FOR EACH EDITION.
YES, ECONOMIC FEATURES?
NOTHING NEW TO REPORT, REALLY.
COMMENTARY?
NOTHING HERE EITHER.

A BUDGET MEETING IS A DAILY MEETING FOR THE PAPER TO DISCUSS THE USE OF SPACE FOR THAT DAY.


STRAW
←ストロー
CLUNK
CLACK
CLACK
CLACK
ガチャ
WILL YOU BE MY GIRL-FRIEND?
PLEASE?
NO, WAIT.
NOT HERE.

...WOULD YOU COME WITH ME?
SLURP


KODAN
VROOM
HEY LADY, WANT A RIDE?
VROOM
VROOM
VROOM
VROOM
AKANE!
YOU'VE GOT TO BE KIDDING! IN THIS SKIRT?
OH, HA HA. DID YOU FORGET TO CHANGE YOUR PANTIES THIS MORNING OR SOMETHING?
THAT'S NOT THE ISSUE HERE.

VROOOM
I WANT TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT SOMETHING.
THEN I'LL WAIT FOR YOU IN FRONT OF YOUR CON-DO.
IT'S NOT OFTEN THAT YOU COME TO SEE ME.
I KNOW.
I THINK THIS MIGHT BE THE FIRST TIME I'VE BEEN HERE.
I'M HOME!
"I'M HOME"?
I'M GOING TO CHANGE, SO JUST SIT ANYWHERE.
A MEN'S MAGAZINE?
FINAL FA-NATIC...?

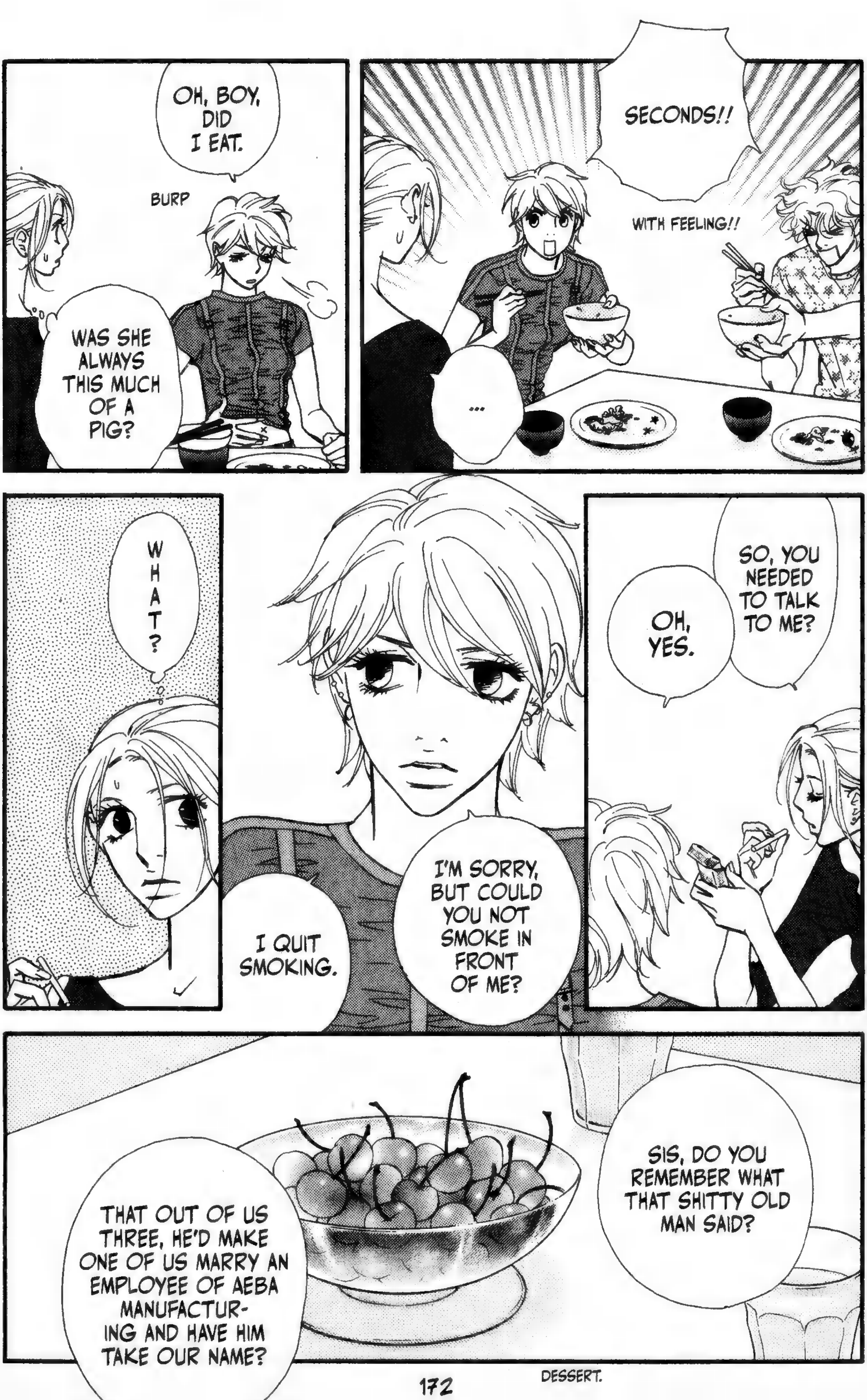
NNN
NNN
SIS, IS THERE SOMETHING ALIVE IN HERE?
HMM? WHAT?
ZZZ...

PLEASE BE QUIET, OKAY?
B-B-B--!
THE BATH-ROOM'S DOWN THE HALL TO THE LEFT.
NO!
SLAM
THUD THUD
SLAM
YOU HAVEN'T HEARD FROM SHINOBU?
POKE
NO! WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
THERE'S A BOY IN YOUR LOFT!
WHAT...YOU MEAN, ONE THAT'S NOT MO-MO?
MO-MO? WHAT?
GRR.
SHE DOESN'T LIKE SOMEONE USING "CHAN" THE FIRST TIME SHE MEETS THEM.
WHO THE HELL ARE YOU?
AGH!
WHO'S THAT?
MY LITTLE SISTER.
OH, IS THIS AKANE-CHAN?

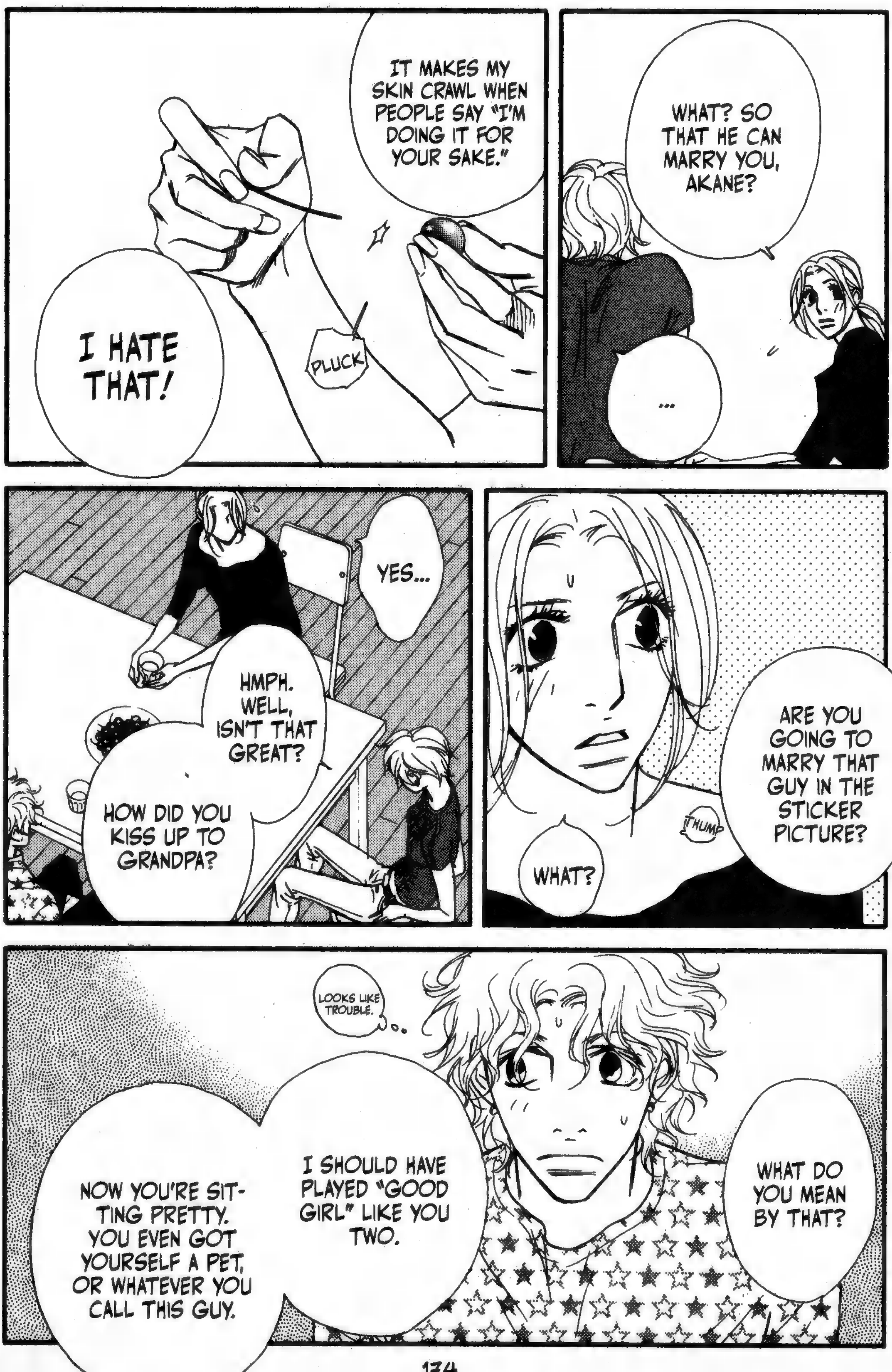
AKANE-CHAN, YOU USED TO BE A GANG MEMBER, RIGHT? YOU LOOK LIKE IT.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, "YOU LOOK LIKE IT"?!
ANYWAY THIS KID IS BLAH BLAH BLAH, AND...
OH, I GET IT.
THEY ARE SISTERS!
WHAT?! YOU UNDERSTAND "BLAH BLAH BLAH"?!
AS IF. WHO THE HELL ARE YOU?
JUST LIKE A GANG MEMBER.
UMM, I'M MOMO AND I LIVE HERE AS A PET.
SUMIRE'S LIVING WITH A MAN?!!
WEREN'T YOU SUPPOSED TO BE A VIRGIN FOREVER?!
AND WHO DECIDED THAT?
I DON'T HAVE THAT KIND OF RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM ANYWAY.
HOW MEAN!

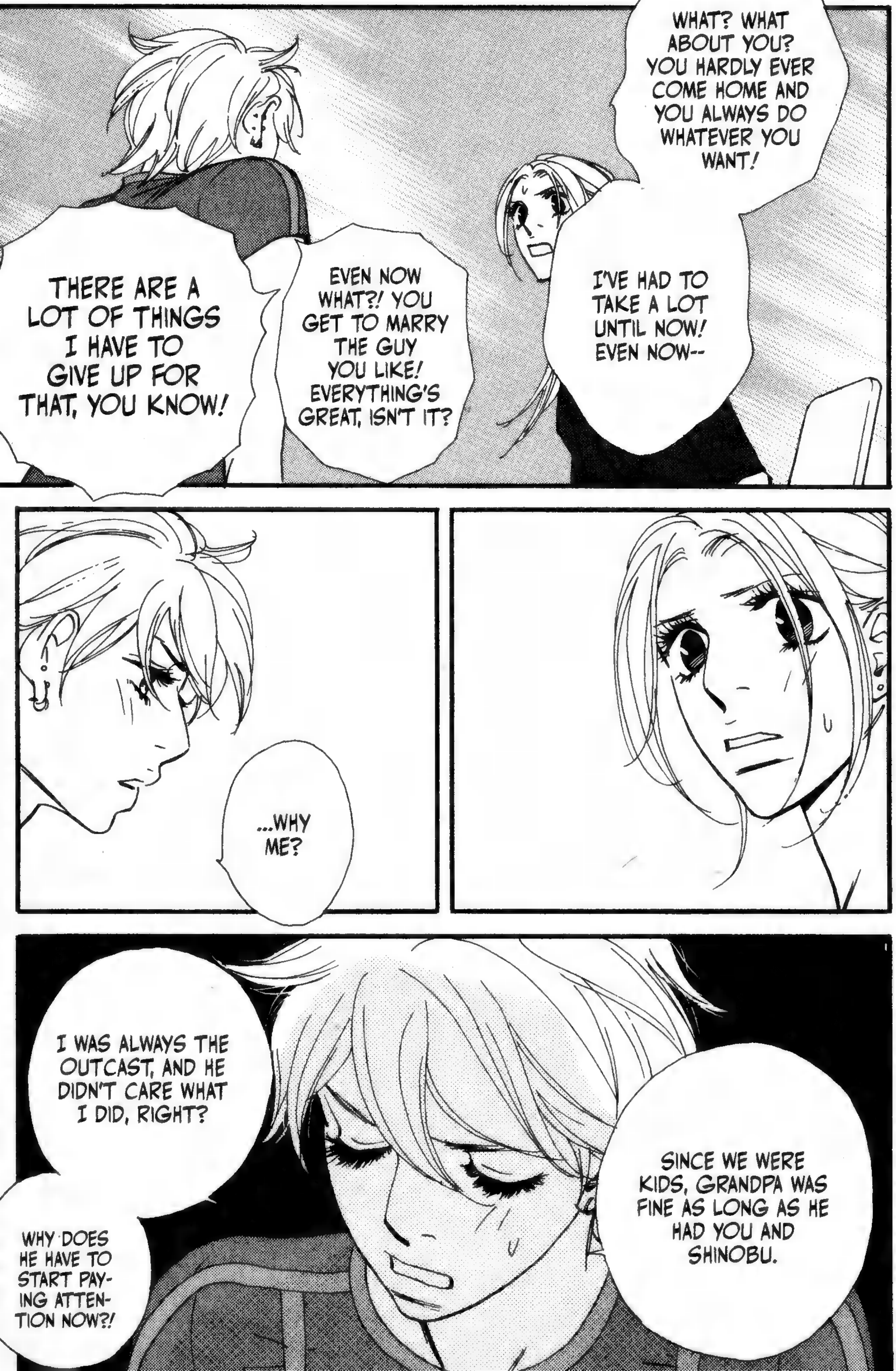
THIS IS THE GUY I'M GOING OUT WITH!
SIS, ISN'T YOUR TASTE IN MEN KIND OF DANGE-ROUS?
THEN WHAT DO YOU CALL THIS, THE FRUIT OF OUR LOVE?
THAT'S WHY I SAID IT'S NOT LIKE THAT!
SO WHAT YOU TOLD GRANDPA REALLY IS TRUE.
HE'S A GOOD-LOOKING GUY, AIN'T HE?
HUH. HE LOOKS EXACT-LY LIKE THAT WRESTLER GUY, MUTA.
THIS ONE! THE STICKER PICTURE ONE.
UH, THAT IS THE GREAT MUTA.
*WRESTLING STAR
I'LL MAKE DINNER. YOU'RE EATING, RIGHT?
UH, YEAH.

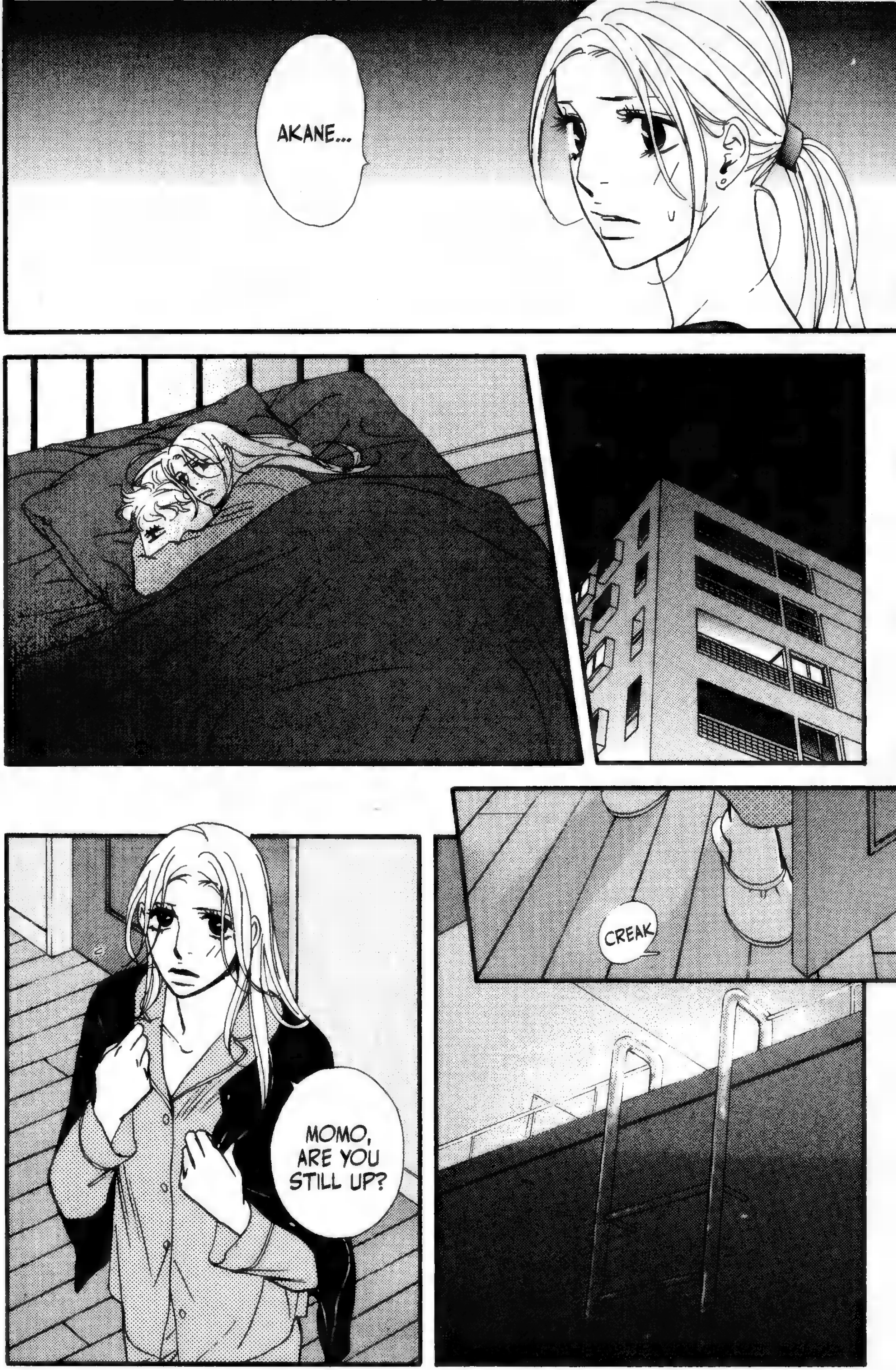
SUMIRE-CHAN'S LIT-TLE SISTER, EH?
わし
OW OW OW!
HMM, SO IT'S NOT A WIG.
THAT CO-LOR, IS IT NATURAL? IS THAT A PERM?
AKANE!! DON'T BE MEAN TO HIM!


SECONDS!!
WITH FEELING!!
...
OH, BOY, DID I EAT.
BURP
WAS SHE ALWAYS THIS MUCH OF A PIG?
SO, YOU NEEDED TO TALK TO ME?
OH, YES.
I'M SORRY, BUT COULD YOU NOT SMOKE IN FRONT OF ME?
I QUIT SMOKING.
WHAT?
SIS, DO YOU REMEMBER WHAT THAT SHITTY OLD MAN SAID?
THAT OUT OF US THREE, HE'D MAKE ONE OF US MARRY AN EMPLOYEE OF AEBA MANUFACTURING AND HAVE HIM TAKE OUR NAME?
DESSERT.

YES, BUT...
...DIDN'T THAT DREAM COME TRUE WHEN SHINO-BU MARRIED THE PRESIDENT OF AEBA?
HE DOESN'T THINK SO.
AND HE WANTS ME, OF ALL PEO-PLE, TO TAKE A HUSBAND.
SO HAS HE FINALLY GONE SENILE OR WHAT?
AREN'T YOU GOING OUT WITH SOME-ONE?
OF COURSE, I TOLD HIM THAT!
HE SAID HE COULDN'T EVEN CONSIDER A BRAT THAT STARTED HIS OWN BUSINESS ON THE INTER-NET.
WOW. WHAT'S HE DOING ON THE INTERNET?
CUSTOM-MADE BIKES...
...AND IMPORT-ING PARTS BY PROXY AND RE-PAIRS. STUFF LIKE THAT.
IT WAS GOING WELL EVEN AFTER HE PETITIONED TO BECOME A COR-PORATION.
THEN...
...HE STARTED SAYING THAT HE'D HAND IT ALL OVER TO HIS BUDDIES AND GET A JOB AT AEBA.

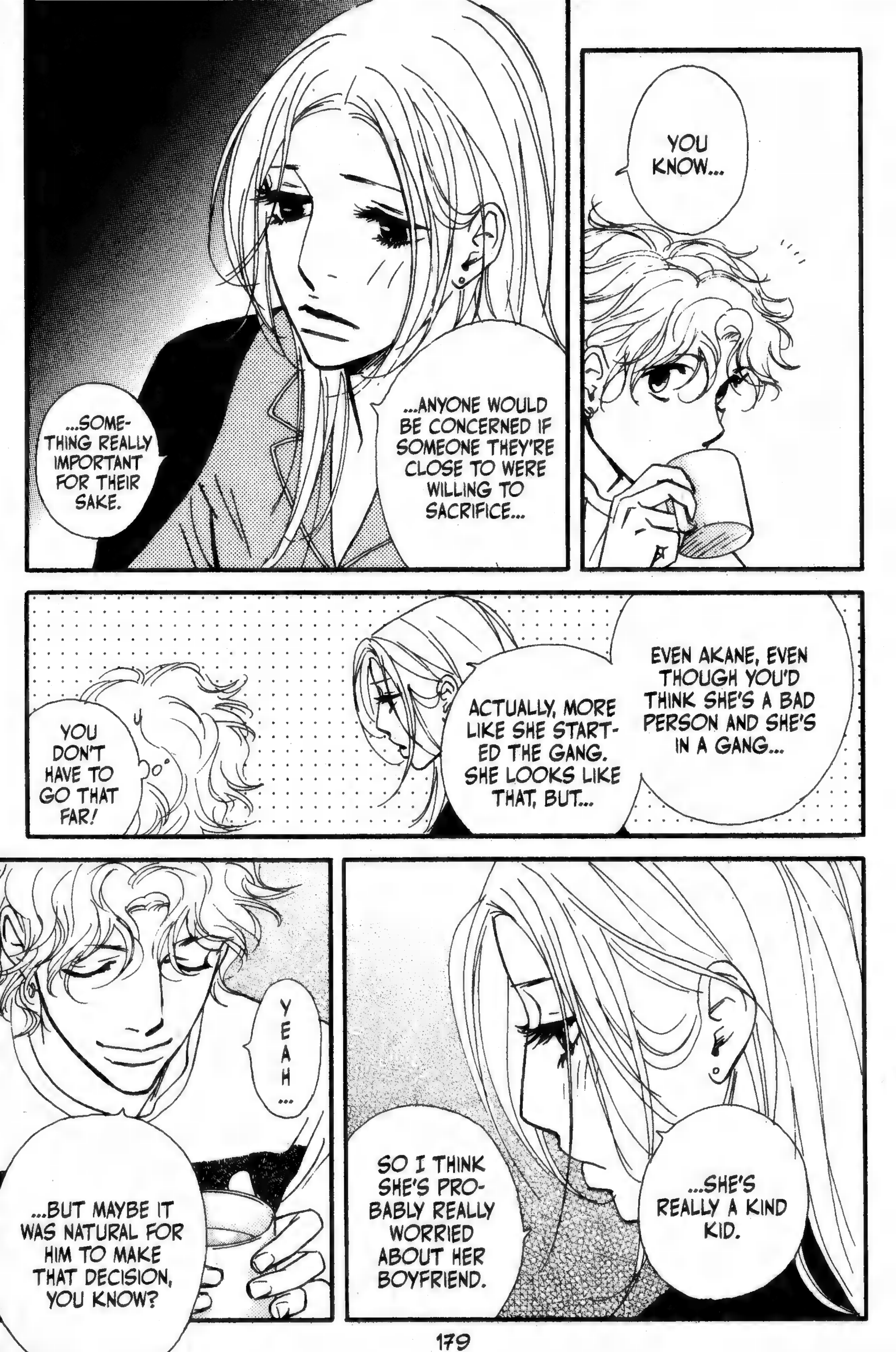

IT MAKES MY SKIN CRAWL WHEN PEOPLE SAY "I'M DOING IT FOR YOUR SAKE."
PLUCK
I HATE THAT!
WHAT? SO THAT HE CAN MARRY YOU, AKANE?
...
YES...
HMPH. WELL, ISN'T THAT GREAT?
HOW DID YOU KISS UP TO GRANDPA?
ARE YOU GOING TO MARRY THAT GUY IN THE STICKER PICTURE?
THUMP
WHAT?
LOOKS LIKE TROUBLE.
NOW YOU'RE SIT-TING PRETTY. YOU EVEN GOT YOURSELF A PET, OR WHATEVER YOU CALL THIS GUY.
I SHOULD HAVE PLAYED "GOOD GIRL" LIKE YOU TWO.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THAT?

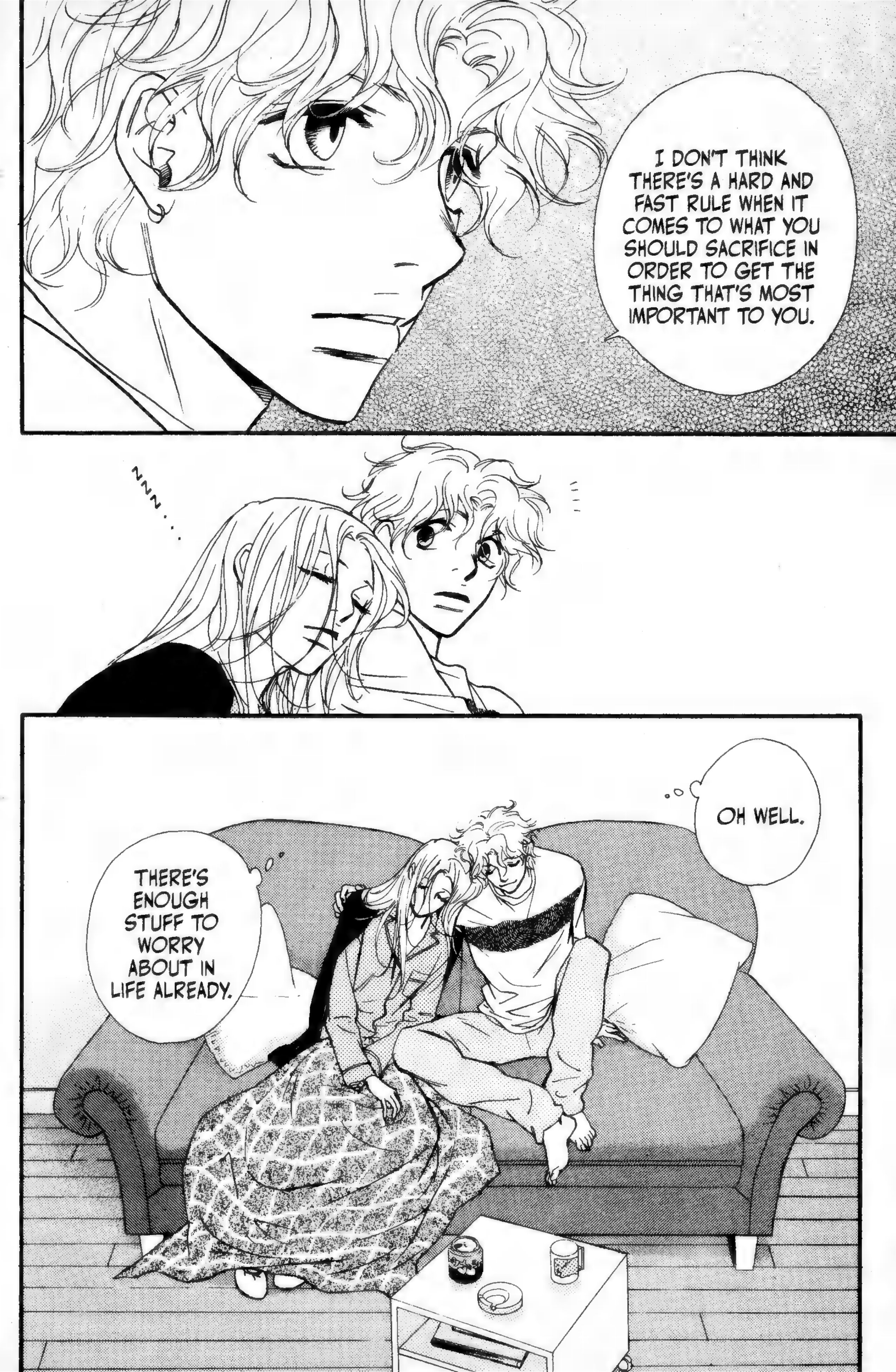

WHAT? WHAT ABOUT YOU? YOU HARDLY EVER COME HOME AND YOU ALWAYS DO WHATEVER YOU WANT!
I'VE HAD TO TAKE A LOT UNTIL NOW! EVEN NOW--
EVEN NOW WHAT?! YOU GET TO MARRY THE GUY YOU LIKE! EVERYTHING'S GREAT, ISN'T IT?
THERE ARE A LOT OF THINGS I HAVE TO GIVE UP FOR THAT, YOU KNOW!
...WHY ME?
SINCE WE WERE KIDS, GRANDPA WAS FINE AS LONG AS HE HAD YOU AND SHINOBU.
I WAS ALWAYS THE OUTCAST, AND HE DIDN'T CARE WHAT I DID, RIGHT?
WHY DOES HE HAVE TO START PAYING ATTENTION NOW?!


AKANE...
CREAK
MOMO, ARE YOU STILL UP?

YOU CAN'T SLEEP?
AREN'T YOU GOING AWAY THIS WEEK?
OH, MY SHOW IN CHINA?
YEP.
WHAT KIND OF DANCE ARE YOU DOING THIS TIME?
IT'S ONE I'VE DONE BEFORE. IT'S VERY AB-STRACT AND AVANT-GARDE.
YOU KNOW ABOUT TUNING FORKS, RIGHT? WELL, I'M DAN-CING WITH THAT AS AN IMAGE.
OOH.
IT'S NOT EVERY DAY THAT YOU ASK ME STUFF LIKE THAT, SUMIRE-CHAN.
YOU THINK SO?
MAYBE YOU GET LONELY WHEN I'M NOT AROUND?

...YEAH, MAYBE...
UH-OH, SHE'S FEEL-ING VULNER-ABLE.
IT MAKES ME A BIT HAPPY, THOUGH.
IT'S SHORTER THAN MY TRIP TO AMERICA. IT'S ONLY FIVE DAYS AND FOUR NIGHTS.
BEIJING, RIGHT?
YEAH--OH, THAT'S RIGHT!
FOR SOME REASON THERE'S A REHEARSAL IN HONG KONG.
SHOULD I CHECK IN ON HASUMI-KUN? TO SEE IF HE'S CHEATING ON YOU AND STUFF?
HA HA HA HA.
CHEAT-ING, EH?
I WAS TRYING NOT TO THINK ABOUT THAT POSSIBILITY, YOU KNOW!
JUST KIDDING! HE'S NOT. THERE'S A LOT OF PRETTY GIRLS IN HONG KONG, BUT HE'S PROBABLY NOT.
MEAN.


YOU KNOW...
...ANYONE WOULD BE CONCERNED IF SOMEONE THEY'RE CLOSE TO WERE WILLING TO SACRIFICE...
...SOME-THING REALLY IMPORTANT FOR THEIR SAKE.
EVEN AKANE, EVEN THOUGH YOU'D THINK SHE'S A BAD PERSON AND SHE'S IN A GANG...
ACTUALLY, MORE LIKE SHE START-ED THE GANG. SHE LOOKS LIKE THAT, BUT...
YOU DON'T HAVE TO GO THAT FAR!
...SHE'S REALLY A KIND KID.
SO I THINK SHE'S PRO-BABLY REALLY WORRIED ABOUT HER BOYFRIEND.
YEAH...
...BUT MAYBE IT WAS NATURAL FOR HIM TO MAKE THAT DECISION, YOU KNOW?


I DON'T THINK THERE'S A HARD AND FAST RULE WHEN IT COMES TO WHAT YOU SHOULD SACRIFICE IN ORDER TO GET THE THING THAT'S MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU.
ZZZ...
OH WELL.
THERE'S ENOUGH STUFF TO WORRY ABOUT IN LIFE ALREADY.

AKANE-SAN, YOU CAN GO AHEAD AND TAKE A BREAK.
OKAY, I'LL TAKE A SHORT ONE.
CLACK CLACK CLACK
WHEW.
は
AKANE!
SHIT!
SMUSH
SIS.
I'M GLAD I FOUND YOU!
I WAS SURE YOU WORKED AROUND HERE, BUT I DIDN'T REMEMBER EXACTLY WHERE.

YOU SHOULD'VE CALLED.
IT WOULDN'T PICK UP.
OH! THAT'S RIGHT. I LEFT IT OFF.
SO WHAT'S UP?
NOTHING... I WAS JUST WONDERING WHAT--
AKANE!
SO THIS IS WHERE YOU ARE! ♡
I WAS LOOKING FOR YOU, MY SWEETHEA--
↑SLOW MOTION
--RT! ♡
AKANE!
YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO HIT HIM!
I TOLD YOU THAT YOU LOOK STUPID IN A MONKEY SUIT! AND THAT HAIR!
IT'S ALMOST DISGUST-ING!
BEFORE

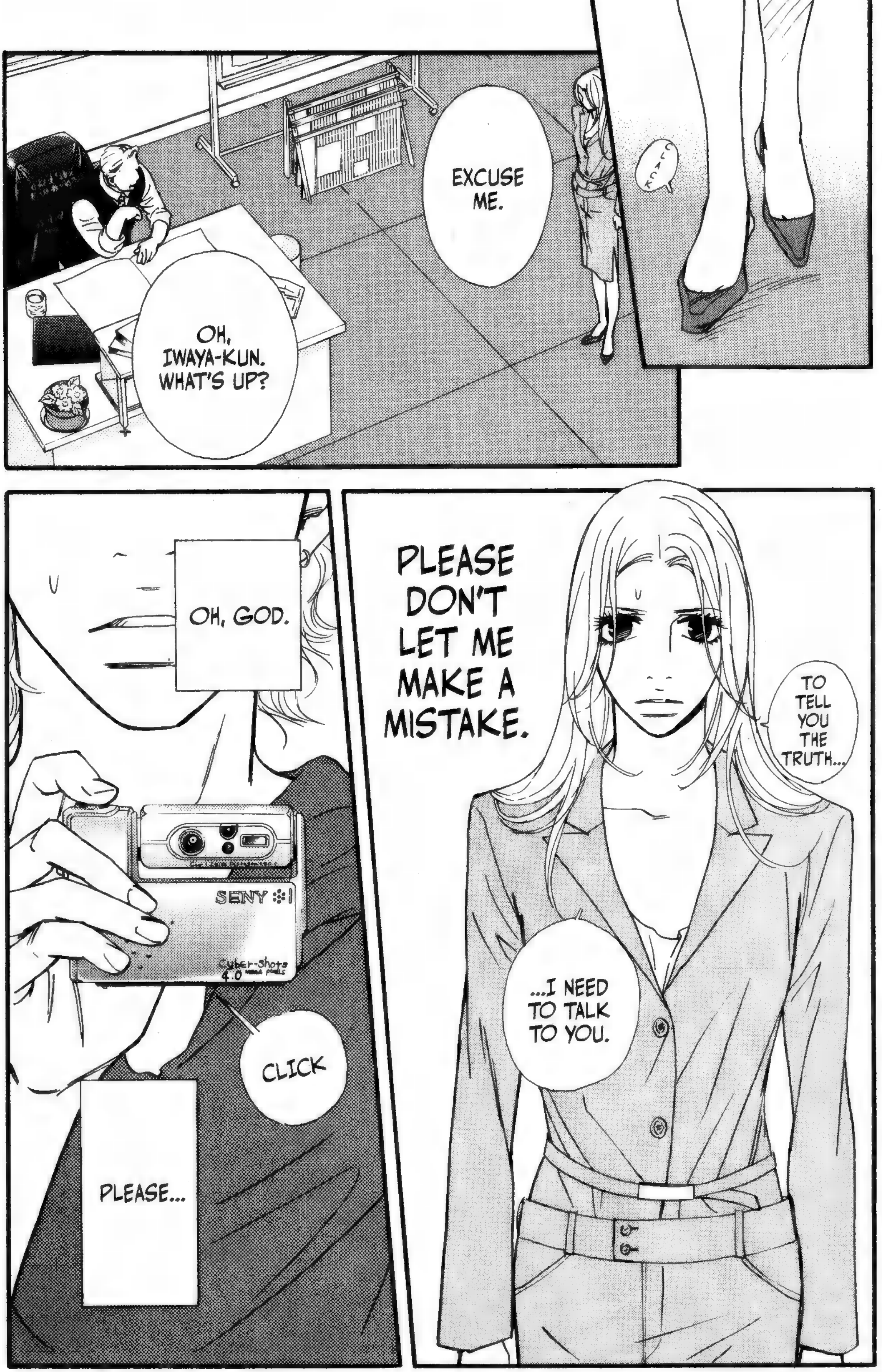
WHY?! WASN'T THE BIKE SHOP YOUR DREAM?!
RIGHT NOW MY DREAM IS TO BECOME THE PRESIDENT OF AEBA MANUFACTURING!
LEAVE IT ALL TO ME!
STUPID! IT'S NOT YOUR FAMILY BUSINESS!
I GOT THE JOB!
USED TO IT.
ARE YOU SERIOUS?!
TURNS OUT IT WAS GOOD THAT I HIGHLIGHTED BEING IN A STOCK COMPANY'S THINK TANK AND KNOWING THE INS AND OUTS OF MARKETING. ♡
I DON'T WANT YOU TO CHANGE WHO YOU ARE--
YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO TAKE OVER YOUR OWN BUSINESS!
I WANT TO DO THIS BECAUSE I NEED YOU AND OUR KID!

WHAT KID?!
WAIT A MIN-UTE!
...
?!?
CONFIRMING THAT HE WON'T GET HIT.
IT'S NOT LIKE THERE'S SOME HARD AND FAST RULE THAT SAYS WHAT YOU SHOULD SACRIFICE...
...TO GET THE THING THAT'S MOST IMPOR-TANT TO YOU. RIGHT?
...
I THINK I'VE HEARD THAT SOMEWHERE BEFORE...

TO BE HAPPY...
...EVERYONE HAS TO MAKE CHOICES.
PLEASE, PLEASE...
...DON'T LET ME MAKE A MISTAKE.

WE'RE GOING TO GO FIND THE SMOK-ING AREA.
OKAY. I'LL WATCH YOUR BAGS...
...BUT I WON'T CHASE AFTER THEM IF THEY'RE STOLEN.
HMM?

NO WAY! HA-SUMI-KUN?!
HA--


CLACK
EXCUSE ME.
OH, IWAYA-KUN. WHAT'S UP?
PLEASE DON'T LET ME MAKE A MISTAKE.
TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH...
...I NEED TO TALK TO YOU.
OH, GOD.
SENY
CLICK
PLEASE...

BRAND NEW

MA-CHAN GOES FOR IT!

1. UM, OGAWA, DIDN'T YOU PAY FOR THOSE TWO FRILLY DRESSES OUT OF YOUR OWN POCKET?

2. WHAT IS THIS "BRAND NEW," ANYWAY? IT HASN'T CHANGED A BIT FROM THE START.

MAIN STAFFS

original stories & graphics by YAYOI OGAWA
editor in charge・・・M・MATSUI
graphic asistants・・・JUNJUN,K・YOSHIHISA
N・SHIMA,K・OHTA
Y・SHIROMARU,A・KOYANO

CHECK IT!
小川彌生オフィシャルサイト
EXTRA HEAVY SYROP
http://www.linkclub.or.jp/~asasin/

OGAWA AND MATSU'S COMMENTARY ON THE STORY

"MUTUAL THERAPY"

M:

ALL OF MOMO'S GIRLFRIENDS ARE PRETTY, AREN'T THEY? HE MUST BE ATTRACTED TO PRETTY FACES. THE CELL PHONE WALLPAPER EPISODE WAS ONE WE DISCUSSED A WHILE AGO, BUT DIDN'T HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO USE. IT'S FINALLY BEEN PUBLISHED. PINK IS CUTE, ISN'T SHE?

O:

THE BIG SECRET IN THIS CHAPTER IS THAT THE KID CAN SEE THE ANGELS FLYING AROUND HASUMI-KUN. YOU PROBABLY CAN'T SEE THEM IF YOUR SOUL ISN'T PURE. I DIDN'T GIVE A NAME TO MOMO'S SICKNESS, BECAUSE I WAS AFRAID THAT IF I CHOSE A DISEASE, SOMEONE WOULD POINT OUT AN INCONSISTENCY. HOWEVER, IT'S A TYPE OF PANIC ATTACK. I READ A LOT OF PAPERS, BUT IT SURPRISED ME THAT THREE PERCENT OF THE POPULATION IS AFFECTED.

"ICE QUEEN"

M:

WE GOT A BIG KICK OUT OF DISCUSSING SHINOBU'S HOBBIES. IT SEEMS THAT EVERY WEEK, THERE'S A GATHERING OF CAR MANIACS AT THE FAMILY RESTAURANT IN OGAWA-SAN'S NEIGHBORHOOD.

O:

THE CORVETTE THAT SHINOBU DRIVES IS BLACK. SUMIRE'S IS RED AND IT'S A HAND-ME-DOWN FROM SHINOBU. SHINOBU REALLY WANTS TO CUSTOMIZE HERS, BUT SHE HESITATES BECAUSE OF HER HUSBAND. PLEASE USE THE JAPANESE SWORD SCENE AS A COLORING PAGE AND PLEASE COLOR THE CLOTHES YELLOW.

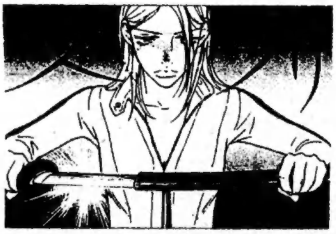
"WOMAN OF THE CANCER SIGN"

M:

THIS EPISODE REFERENCES A CONVERSATION FROM THE MOVIE *TRICK*, STARRING HIROSHI ABE AND YUKIE NAKAMA. THIS CHAPTER'S OPENING ILLUSTRATION IS REALLY CUTE, ISN'T IT? IT SEEMS OGAWA-SAN IMAGINED THESE EXPRESSIONS ON SUMIRE'S FACE, SO SHE DREW THEM. IT'S REALLY DISAPPOINTING THAT WE COULDN'T BRING YOU ALL THE SUMIRES IN COLOR.

O:

WE GET A PEEK AT MOMO'S PLAYFULLY SEDUCTIVE SIDE. IT LOOKS LIKE HE'S GOOD AT PRETENDING HE'S NEGLECTED. BY THE WAY, THREE OF MY STAFF AND MY EDITOR, MATSU, ARE ALL CANCERS. I'M SURROUNDED BY FOUR "WOMEN OF THE CANCER SIGN."



"KOTOBUKI-TAISHA"

M:

I REALLY LIKE EDDIE, TOO. I THINK HIS ROLE IS SIMILAR TO THAT OF MR. JAMES FROM *FROM EROICA WITH LOVE*. THE OTHER DAY, I DISCOVERED AN OTAKU SCIENTIST CHARACTER LIKE EDDIE IN ONE OF MOTO HAGIO'S WORKS, *SEIREI GARI*. A LOT OF SHOJO MANGA MASTERPIECES INFLUENCE YOU, DON'T THEY, OGAWA?

O:

EDDIE WAS POPULAR, YOU KNOW. I WAS A BIT SURPRISED, ALTHOUGH I LIKE HIM TOO. I MEAN, HE DOESN'T HAVE EYES, SO HE'S EASY TO D--I MEAN, HIS HAIR IS JUST BLACK SO THE PAGE GETS FILLED--NO, UMM...IT'S REALLY FUN TO DRAW HIS BODY'S AWKWARD MOVEMENTS.

♡

"SOME KIND OF 'EN'."

M:

THIS IS ONE OF MY FAVORITE STORIES FROM "*YOU'RE MY PET*". IT'S A COMPLICATED IDEA, BUT EMMA AND HUGH'S STORYTELLING IS EFFECTIVE AND EASY TO READ, ISN'T IT? SUMIRE AND YURI-CHAN'S CONVERSATION IS ALSO WONDERFUL.

O:

THE CONCEPT IS CALLED "TASHOU NO EN" ("REINCARNATION OF EN"), BUT BECAUSE OF THE KANJI, THE WHOLE TIME, I THOUGHT IT WAS THINKING "A LITTLE BIT OF." MATSU DOESN'T KNOW, BUT DURING THE PLANNING STAGE, MY IMAGE OF THIS CONCEPT WAS THE "WHEEL OF LIFE." THAT'S NOT A BUDDHIST, BUT RATHER AN OLD WESTERN EUROPEAN CONSTRUCTION. BUT WHEN I GOT AROUND TO RESEARCHING IT, THAT "WHEEL" ONLY APPLIED TO A PERSON THEMSELVES, NOT THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN TIME AND PEOPLE. I RUSHED AND DID SOME MORE RESEARCH AND ARRIVED AT "FATE." IS THAT "EN"?

"PRIORITIES"

M:

THE WAY SUMIRE WAS SURPRISED WHEN SHE FOUND OUT ABOUT AKANE'S PREGNANCY WAS THE BEST. HER HUGE APPETITE AND THE FACT THAT SHE QUIT SMOKING WERE FORESHADOWING HER PREGNANCY. NO MATTER HOW MANY TIMES I READ THE DRAFT, I DIDN'T NOTICE THAT UNTIL THE PROOFREADING HAD FINISHED. AM I STUPID?

O:

A LOT OF CHARACTERS WE HAVEN'T SEEN IN A WHILE APPEAR IN THIS EPISODE, ALL AT ONCE! AKANE-CHAN'S BOYFRIEND IS THE BOY WHO HAD A HOLE IN HIS CONDOM IN "CANDY LIFE." BY THE WAY, AKANE ISN'T RYUUNOSUKE'S MODEL; SHE'S HIS ASSISTANT.

You're My Pet 10

KODANSHA COMICS Digital Edition

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